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Sixtieth session

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23rd plenary meeting
Friday, 23 September 2005, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Eliasson ..... (Sweden)

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Agenda item 8 (*continued*)

General debate

The President: I call on His Excellency Mr. Momodu Koroma, Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Republic of Sierra Leone.

Mr. Koroma (Sierra Leone): The delegation of the Republic of Sierra Leone wishes to express its profound appreciation for the significant contribution of the President of the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session to the work of the Assembly and to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the leadership of this body at its sixtieth session. You and your predecessor will always have a special place in the history of the United Nations as Presidents of the General Assembly at the height of the Organization's reform process.

The United Nations was founded on the principle of multilateral cooperation for the maintenance of international peace and security. For 60 years, it has been the focus of its Members — rich and poor, big and small — for carrying out that critical responsibility. Today, for many of its Members, the Organization is the great hope, not only for the achievement of peace and security, but also for the attainment of every objective of human aspiration, particularly development, human rights, freedom and democracy.

The United Nations was designed to serve the world of the aftermath of the Second World War — a world different in many ways from today's world. That is why my delegation has welcomed with total commitment reforms in the United Nations system to reflect the realities of today's world, and we will continue to participate fully in the reform process.

We welcome the outcome document (resolution 60/1) of last week's summit and applaud the negotiations that led to its adoption by consensus. The success of those negotiations indicate that, in spite of our differences and individual sovereign interests, Member States recognize that we have more things in common than things that divide us and that, for a better world, common interests must enjoy precedence over individual interests.

The rhetoric that has accompanied the outcome document has been impressive and reassuring, especially for developing countries and countries in conflict or emerging from conflict. If those soothing statements are matched by action, this year's United Nations summit and General Assembly session will have a landmark effect on the Organization and on the world. We are optimistic that it will.

This is the last Assembly session before the completion of the withdrawal of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) at the end of December. UNAMSIL has achieved successes that are unique in the history of United Nations peacekeeping efforts. Sierra Leoneans will forever remember the positive difference that the Mission made in their

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country's crisis and in their lives. For that, we can never sufficiently thank the United Nations and the entire international community for coming to our rescue and for standing by us when we could not stand alone. In particular, we are profoundly grateful to countries that contributed troops to UNAMSIL and countries that financially supported the Mission.

With a tremendous feeling of relief, we welcome the proposal to constitute an integrated United Nations office to succeed UNAMSIL, with the objective of supporting Sierra Leone in continuing to address critical areas of concern, including the causes of the conflict, consolidating the peace, human rights, development, legal, judicial and governance reforms, the rule of law and security. That measure has allayed the fears of Sierra Leoneans that UNAMSIL's departure would create a security vacuum and would mark the end of programmes associated with the Mission. We eagerly look forward to yet another success in the United Nations peacekeeping experiment in Sierra Leone.

Today, the Organization is preparing to transform its peacekeeping functions in Sierra Leone to meet some of the post-conflict needs of the country. That is a landmark decision that could serve as a model for effective coordination of strategies and programmes among the United Nations, its agencies and programmes, and organizations and development partners in countries emerging from conflict.

We note with interest that the architecture and plans for the operation of the new integrated office were based on close and extensive cooperation among relevant parties of the United Nations Secretariat and various United Nations agencies and organizations that constituted the country team. Sierra Leone hopes that that process of consultation and cooperation will continue. We urge the United Nations Mission to work closely with existing national institutions and with other initiatives that we have set up over the past five years to tackle post-conflict problems. We have no doubt that the new office will provide a "guinea pig" for the work of the proposed United Nations Peacebuilding Commission, to which we will spare no effort to lend support.

As members are aware, it is not enough to establish these short-term yet essential post-conflict bridges; what we desperately need is the mobilization of resources, including those required for capacity-building for sustainable economic and social development. The objective is not merely to ensure that Sierra Leone and other countries emerging from conflict do not slide back into conflict; rather, the ultimate objective must be to ensure that Sierra Leoneans do not remain in abject poverty.

The creation of the Peacebuilding Commission will be in consonance with the views expressed by my country's President five years ago when, from this rostrum at the Millennium Summit, he spoke about the imperative of adaptation by the United Nations. He pleaded with the Organization to continue to adapt and equip itself to deal with the perennial problems and new manifestations of human insecurity and underdevelopment. He also spoke about some of the ways in which Sierra Leone had tested the capacity of the United Nations to adapt itself to respond to local and global challenges.

The three main elements — development, peace and security and human rights — highlighted in the Secretary-General's report entitled "In larger freedom" (*A/59/2005*) and in the outcome document (*resolution 60/1*) of last week's High-level Plenary Meeting are all interrelated. However, as the document states, development is a central goal by itself. That is why no one should be surprised at the importance that Sierra Leone — a poor country emerging from a devastating conflict — attaches to the development cluster of the outcome document, including the section on ways in which to meet the special needs of Africa.

The people of Sierra Leone continue to attach importance to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and to the commitments our heads of State or Government made in the Assembly five years ago. The principal purpose of the just-concluded High-level Plenary Meeting was to renew our determination to fulfil those commitments.

The General Assembly would be interested to know that the food security objective of ensuring by the year 2007 that no Sierra Leonean goes to bed hungry is consistent with, and directly linked to, the MDGs; so are the objectives embodied in our Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper. We are determined to continue to work with our development partners to achieve those objectives.

For the overwhelming majority of us, "freedom from want" means the collective national and international responsibility to eradicate extreme

poverty, the collective responsibility to ensure that people in all regions of the world enjoy, first and foremost, their human right to food, basic health care, education, clean water and other amenities that sustain life. As we see it, "freedom from fear" means the collective responsibility of all States to remove and eliminate threats to the safety and security of people everywhere, such as the illicit traffic and use of small arms and the accumulation of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction. "Freedom from want" and "freedom from fear" also imply the responsibility to accept without reservation the relationship between disarmament and development.

Furthermore, "freedom to live in dignity" implies the collective responsibility of all States to ensure that their peoples are treated with dignity. This includes the protection of all the economic, social, cultural, political and civil rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In our view, that responsibility implies cooperation and assistance where necessary to enhance the capacity for prevention and protection. In this connection, Sierra Leone is grateful for the assistance it continues to receive from the United Nations in the field of human rights.

Sierra Leone has continued to make giant strides in all areas of human endeavour since the end of armed conflict in 2002. Since then, presidential, parliamentary and local elections — the latter ushering in a revival of local government that had been dormant for nearly 30 years — have been held in conformity with democratic principles and practice. We are now preparing for the 2007 presidential and parliamentary elections to consolidate further our gains in the democratic process.

Sierra Leone believes that children are the best investment to ensure a bright future for our country. Consequently, we hold the view that development and respect for human rights start with them and that the Millennium Development Goals are a critical tool for achieving those goals. That is why we have increased the space devoted to education, as indicated by enrolment figures that have jumped from 659,503 in the 2001-2002 academic year to 1,158,399 in 2003-2004 — this in a country whose total population is 5 million.

We believe that the sound administration of justice, in particular strict adherence to the rule of law and human rights, is indispensable to attaining durable peace and political stability. Accordingly, the Government has re-established civil authority throughout Sierra Leone through the reopening and strengthening of judicial and law enforcement institutions, and we are in the process of establishing a national human rights commission.

Two transitional institutions, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which has just published its report, and the Special Court, have contributed immensely to the peace process. It is the Government's intention to implement the Commission's recommendations, to which we attach great importance as a crucial instrument of durable peace.

Let me take this opportunity to appeal to the United Nations, the international community and our friends to support the Special Court to enable it to accomplish its mandate.

There is no doubt that the United Nations and the international community have made important strides in addressing impunity. However, it is our belief that the international community should do more than support the international tribunals, truth and reconciliation commissions and other mechanisms of a transitional justice system. It is our fervent hope that the process of peace and reconciliation in Sierra Leone will not end with the report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission or the end of the work of the Special Court. Reconciliation would be incomplete without addressing the special needs of the victims of the heinous crimes that were perpetrated on civilians during the armed conflict.

I solemnly appeal to the international community to assist us in supporting victims of war crimes and crimes against humanity. Within its limited resources, the Government has made every effort to address the special needs of the victims of the heinous crimes committed during the 11-year rebel armed conflict. But we need international support for these victims through, for instance, the Special Fund for War Victims envisaged under the 1999 Lomé Peace Agreement and the National Commission for War-Affected Children.

This address would be incomplete without reference to the security situation in the West African subregion. While Sierra Leone is enjoying relative peace and stability and the capacity of its security forces continues to be enhanced by the International Military Advisory and Training Team, there is still an air of uncertainty in the neighbourhood and the

subregion. Because of the porosity of the borders and the historically fluid nature of the conflict in the subregion, we will feel safe and secure only in a conflict-free region.

In the light of this, I would like to appeal to the United Nations, the international community and our friends to continue to support measures to resolve the conflicts that have plagued the subregion for so long and diverted scarce resources and energy from development. But let me remind members about the imperative of recognizing the fact that the achievement of lasting peace requires wholesome measure for the entire subregion. In particular, we recommend a subregional approach by the United Nations, the African Union, the European Union, the Economic Community of West African States and other interested parties to post-conflict activities, including disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, security-sector reform and post-conflict peacebuilding.

Finally, at the time of the debate of the sixtieth session of the General Assembly, we should be reminded that the United Nations is and should remain at the centre of efforts to harmonize activities to attain its common objectives. This Organization belongs to us all and operates in the larger interest of all its members. Let this sixtieth anniversary be a time for recommitment to the principles and purposes of the Charter, a time for renewed determination to build on the successes of this great Organization.

The President: I now have the honour of giving the floor to His Excellency Mr. Mamadou Bamba, Minister of State and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire.

Mr. Bamba (Côte d'Ivoire) (*spoke in French*): On behalf of my delegation, I wish to express my sincere congratulations on your election as President of the sixtieth session of the General Assembly. May I wish you and the members of the Bureau full success and assure you of my delegation's full support and cooperation.

I would like to pay tribute to your predecessor, Mr. Jean Ping, who during his mandate substantially contributed greatly to reviving discussion of United Nations reform and activities for development and international cooperation. I would also like to congratulate warmly the Secretary-General for his courageous initiatives to give our Organization new momentum and further the fundamental ideals and principles of the United Nations.

Mr. Hachani (Tunisia), Vice-President, took the Chair.

This session is of special importance for the Member States and the Organization itself because it takes place at a time when States are asked to speak about thorough-going reforms of the Organization in order to permit it to deal with the triple challenge of development, peace and security and the promotion and defence of human rights. The summit just held on progress in achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) was not as successful as we had hoped it would be. We can be gratified, however, that we were able, despite the difficulties, to adopt a final document reaffirming the Goals and the Monterrey Consensus on Financing for Development, adopted in 2002. For the first time, we were also able to condemn all acts of terrorism, regardless of motive, of who commits them and of where they are committed. My delegation hopes that we will, during this sixtieth session, be able to adopt a general, comprehensive convention on international terrorism and set up a Human Rights Council.

Efforts to achieve greater justice in international economic relations have not been as successful as we had hoped. The gap between the developed and developing countries is widening. The economies of the developing countries are deteriorating and, in some cases, their citizens are becoming pauperized on a broad scale. The countries of the third world are being thwarted in their efforts to develop, labouring under the weight of indebtedness, the volatility in commodity prices, barriers to access to the markets of developed countries, inadequate official development assistance and scarce financial resources, not to mention the conflicts and various pandemics afflicting our populations. I would like to point out that indebtedness is a form of bondage and indebted economies are economies that function under constraints. Finding a durable, innovative and daring solution to this problem is one of the prerequisites for any resumption of growth, not only in heavily indebted countries, but in most developing countries. This is why my delegation welcomes the recent decision to cancel the debt of 18 developing countries, while we deplore, as other delegations have, the limited scope of that decision. We would like it to be extended to all African countries.

The effective liberalization of international trade can generate sufficient resources for African economies and thus fund various education, health and infrastructure programmes. Unfortunately, customs and trade barriers that bear down on African exports, as well as subsidies to agriculture in the Western countries, cancel out the development efforts of the African countries that are already labouring under the burden of debt. Debt alone consumes four times more budget resources than those we need for education and health. That is why I would like to associate my country's voice with the call for justice and equity in seeking sustainable solutions to problems arising from the multilateral trade system. Here, I draw particular attention to access for our products to developed markets and the subsidies and other forms of domestic support granted by the wealthy countries to their farmers, which impair the competitiveness of our products on world markets.

The great challenges facing the world cannot be met unless we do it in the overall context of sustained solidarity. That is why Côte d'Ivoire is glad to see new initiatives put forward by Member States to mobilize additional funds or increase funds aimed at fostering development in poor countries. We congratulate the proponents of those initiatives. We would like, inter alia, to mention the allocation of special drawing rights and coordinated measures to encourage voluntary private contributions, the international financial facility presented by the British Government, which has been supported by some developed countries, and a reduction in the price of transferring funds from migrants to their countries of origin. In some States, those remittances constitute 65 per cent of all development assistance. We would also like to mention the contribution of a solidarity surcharge on air tickets in favour of sustained development, a proposal presented by Germany, Brazil, Chile and France in September 2004 that seeks to combat hunger, poverty and fund sustainable development, in particular as regards combating HIV/AIDS and other pandemics. We hope that such new sources of financing along with, and as a complement to, traditional financing resources will effectively contribute to combating poverty in the world and bring us closer to attaining the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Attaining the MDGs is a source of hope for the Côte d'Ivoire, which has for some years now been trying to emerge from the socio-political crisis that has ravaged our country. In the first national Ivorian report on the MDGs, which was issued in 2003 based on the data provided in regard to each of the eight development goals, it clearly appears that the Goals will be difficult to achieve by 2015 if the international community does not continue to provide financial support, including the cancelling of our considerable foreign debt. So, I would like to reiterate the appeal of the Government of National Reconciliation to the United Nations and to development partners, both bilateral and multilateral, to help us more in facing the new challenges of rebuilding the country, in particular, reintegrating internally displaced persons and rehabilitating our infrastructure, be they educational, health-related, cultural, or environmental.

No country can develop and protect its population from need, if it cannot take effective measures against the diseases devastating it, such as malaria, tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS and other contagious diseases, which pose a serious threat to the entire world, particularly the poor countries, and which represent obstacles to the realization of development goals. That is why my delegation feels that the international community should intensify and coordinate its efforts aimed at providing access to generic medicines for patients in developing countries, including antiretrovirals. When the time comes, Côte d'Ivoire will fully support the world initiative to be launched in 2006 aimed at strengthening the health systems in developing countries by 2010.

As regards human rights, my delegation is gratified by efforts made by the United Nations to bring about respect for the human person and to combat impunity in Côte d'Ivoire. We particularly appreciate the visit by the High Commissioner for Human Rights last July, the visits by various commissions to investigate the situation and the visits by Special Rapporteurs. The Government is still waiting to hear the results of the latest international investigation, carried out by the United Nations from July through September 2004, covering important issues such as impunity, serious violations of human rights, international humanitarian law and mercenaries.

Trafficking in children has become an increasing problem in Africa and particularly in the countries of West Africa. West African leaders are aware that only by fighting together against this shameful trafficking will they be able to overcome it. That is why, in addition to the bilateral agreements already established

and at the initiative of Côte d'Ivoire, nine West African States, meeting on 27 July 2005 in Abidjan, adopted a multilateral cooperation agreement to combat trafficking in children in West Africa. This multilateral legal instrument contains binding obligations on all the States Parties and specific obligations for countries of origin and destination of children who are the victims of child trafficking.

As regards the resolution of conflicts on the African continent, there has been notable progress throughout the year. We are encouraged by positive developments in Sudan, Burundi, Liberia, Sierra Leone and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which includes, in some cases, the satisfactory holding of elections. Nevertheless, despite progress in conflict settlement, we must remain aware of the fact that the situations, generally speaking, remain fragile. The international community must therefore act more resolutely to help countries in conflict tackle the genuine causes of the conflict, while combating poverty, consolidating democratic institutions and promoting those countries' economic and social development.

While we can legitimately rejoice at the resolution of certain conflicts, we must note that, deplorably, certain situations are still far from settled. This is the case in my country, which has not yet found the road to peace, despite the many efforts made by the international community through various initiatives over the past three years, in particular the Linas-Marcoussis, Accra and Pretoria Agreements. The United Nations, through the Security Council, has invested a great deal of energy in strengthening the peace and reconciliation process in my country. We welcome all the measures taken thus far by the Security Council and are particularly encouraged by the fact that more blue helmets have been sent and that Mr. Antonio Monteiro has been appointed as the United Nations High Representative for the elections in Côte d'Ivoire.

I would like to avail myself of this opportunity to thank the international community, in particular President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa and other regional and subregional heads of State and organizations, for their readiness to help and for their untiring efforts to bring about a peaceful solution to the Ivorian crisis. As I stand here before you, the process is practically at a deadlock and the presidential election planned for 30 October will not be held on that date.

Holding free, fair and transparent elections within a reasonable time frame remains the main objective to be attained if we are to have sustainable peace in Côte d'Ivoire. Nevertheless, the following priority tasks must first be carried out: disarming and dismantling of militias throughout the country; the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants, following an initial pre-assembly; the restoration of State administration throughout the national territory; the identification of electors and the establishment of electoral rolls — and, in that connection, the soon-to-be-operational Independent Electoral Commission is a bright note; and the provision of funds for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and the electoral process.

Despite the current stagnation in the peace and reconciliation process, the Ivorian Government implores the international community not to be overcome by disappointment, discouragement or irritation. We invite it to participate more intensively and resolutely in finding solutions to the fundamental problems of the crisis, which, alone, can guarantee the return of a lasting and stable peace in my country and reconcile all our sons and daughters.

In that regard, the Security Council must remain actively seized of the case of Côte d'Ivoire, which must be kept on its agenda. In the same connection, the United Nations should, in my delegation's opinion, seriously consider imposing sanctions on all persons who are guilty of serious human rights violations, inciting hatred and violence, obstructing the peace process or violating the arms embargo throughout the country.

The Ivorian people need peace. We realize that this is primarily the responsibility of the Ivorian people themselves. Nevertheless, without the steadfast support of the international community, peace will be difficult to achieve. Therefore, I call upon our common Organization to shoulder its responsibilities and become even more involved and more active in our national peace and reconciliation process. That is its mandate and the goal of its commitment under Chapter VII of the Charter.

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): I now call on His Excellency Mr. Allam-Mi Ahmad, Minister for Foreign Affairs and African Integration of the Republic of Chad.

Mr. Ahmad (Chad) (*spoke in French*): On behalf of my delegation and on my own behalf I would like to extend our warm congratulations to President Eliasson on his election to the presidency of the General Assembly at its sixtieth session and to ensure him of our cooperation in carrying out his noble mission. I would also like to congratulate his predecessor, His Excellency Mr. Jean Ping, who guided our work with tact, skill and competence throughout his term, in spite of the delicate and complex issues that were on the agenda during the fifty-ninth session.

It is clear that the results that we have reached in recent years, both in terms of peacekeeping and in our approach to development issues, have been made possible by the commendable commitment and devotion of each and every Member, at all levels of engagement and responsibility. I would specifically like to underscore the valuable contribution of Secretary-General Kofi Annan, to whom I pay a well deserved tribute.

In his report, entitled "In larger freedom: towards development, security and human rights for all" (*A/59/2005*), our Secretary-General submitted specific proposals that we rightfully believe are appropriate solutions to our shared concerns. Effective implementation of those measures will enhance the effectiveness and credibility of the United Nations and will help us to meet the myriad challenges facing today's world.

A few days ago the heads of State and Government reviewed the international situation from the standpoint of the Millennium Declaration adopted in 2000 and the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals. The conclusions clearly indicate the magnitude of the task that still remains to be accomplished, despite the efforts made by Member States and their national constituents. Those conclusions, which corroborate the analysis of the Secretary-General, tell us that times have changed and that the world — while it still bears scars from the past — has already entered into the future. Today, we are seeing the unparalleled impoverishment of many countries and peoples, as well as the emergence of new abhorrent phenomena, such as terrorism and transboundary crime, not to mention the pandemic of HIV/AIDS and the resurgence of other communicable diseases. Given those formidable developments, it is absolutely necessary to build a new international society that is more caring, more just and better managed, with the United Nations at its centre.

For its part, the Government of Chad, since the establishment of democracy in 1990, has planned and implemented a vast programme of institutional transformation that promotes social and economic development, peace and security, both domestic and external. Moreover, we held a constitutional referendum in June to amend a number of provisions — a clear demonstration of our concern to adapt our institutions to present-day demands, as well as an opportunity for our people to renew their confidence in those institutions.

While our country has achieved sufficient stability within, that is not true of our borders. We are suffering from the impacts of an insecurity that is prevalent among our neighbours, particularly in the Central African Republic and the Sudan, with which Chad shares very long borders. Therefore, prompted by our border security concerns, we have undertaken mediation initiatives to reconcile the belligerents. For those reasons, the Government of Chad took the initiative to bring together the parties to the conflict in Darfur, at Abéché, Chad, in September 2003, to make them listen to reason. Since then, the Government has worked continually and actively towards helping to reach a negotiated solution to that conflict, with support from the African Union and representatives of the international community. Moreover, in spite of his heavy schedule, President Idriss Deby has become personally involved in trying to bring about a pacific settlement to that fratricidal conflict.

Chad's mediation led to the conclusion of the N'Djamena and the Abuja agreements in Nigeria, where talks are still under way to find a comprehensive political agreement and to put an end once and for all to the crisis that has gone on for far too long. Chad will continue to act as a mediator so that one day the western region of the Sudan can at long last regain its calm and stability.

We deplore the violations of the ceasefire that are currently taking place in Darfur and hope that they will cease. We must welcome the formation of the new Government of the Sudan and we are hoping that that will be an opportunity for an acceleration of the peace process of Abuja.

In Chad, we are duty-bound to work with our brothers in the Sudan, with whom we have historical

and geographic ties. But we should not lose sight of the impacts and consequences of the conflict, which have taken a heavy toll, in particular on the border populations. For instance, Chad took a fully sovereign decision to welcome more than 200,000 Sudanese refugees and is providing many forms of support to other humanitarian institutions that are operating in the affected zone. Indeed, the disruption of trade, the deterioration of major roads by humanitarian convoys and all the other costs eat up our meagre resources and are the most common source of political unrest among our own people, who feel that they have been abandoned. Given the scarcity of our resources and the immense needs of refugees and populations in refugee areas, the Government of Chad is counting on substantial assistance from the international community.

The positive developments in the situation in the Central African Republic are facilitating the restoration of constitutional order in that brotherly country. However, the incidence of crime spilling across that country's common borders with Chad and Cameroon is increasing. That phenomenon has caused a new flow of Central African refugees into Chad and they live in very difficult conditions. We call upon the international community to devote greater attention to their plight.

We welcome the initiative taken in that regard by the United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office in the Central African Republic, which brought together representatives of Cameroon, Chad and the Central African Republic at Yaoundé on 26 and 27 August to consider the phenomenon of insecurity on their common borders and to find solutions to it.

Of course, the insecurity on our borders should not cause us to lose sight of other crises in Africa and throughout the world. In Africa, we welcome the developments in Guinea-Bissau, Burundi and Liberia, to mention only those brotherly countries. Undoubtedly, the issue of their reconstruction will have an important place on the agendas of those countries, of the African Union and of the rest of the world.

On the other hand, the situation in Côte d'Ivoire continues to concern us. President Mbeki's mediation has not been able to lead — as had been hoped — to the immediate holding of presidential elections. We urge our Ivorian brethren to engage in dialogue.

In the Middle East, the persistence of the Israeli-Arab conflict continues to poison relations in the subregion, even while the withdrawal from the Gaza Strip is a tangible element in recent developments. We are convinced that it is only through dialogue that a just and lasting solution to that conflict can be found.

With regard to the disagreement between the People's Republic of China and Taiwan, we appreciate Taiwan's tireless efforts to reach a peaceful solution. The international community must encourage the two parties to accept each other. The readmission of Taiwan into the United Nations, which we believe to be a legitimate demand of that country, would be the point of departure for such acceptance.

The interdependence of the concepts of development, peace and security is the basis of our country's support for the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The Millennium Declaration was undoubtedly a strong signal from the partnership of rich and poor countries in favour of a fairer, more balanced and more united world. In itself, it is a great endeavour that could lead to the consolidation of global efforts.

My country has set for itself the same objectives in its development strategies, plans and programmes as are found in the Millennium Declaration, particularly our national poverty reduction strategy and our national strategy for good governance. Undoubtedly, for most of our countries, achieving the MDGs is not very likely, particularly in the areas of promoting peace and security, good governance and economic and social reforms.

There is in Chad, however, a consensus regarding the need for sustained progress on those issues and in other areas related to social, economic and political life. The Government of Chad is, therefore, focusing in particular on activities relating to the protection of children, the promotion of maternal health, the education of girls and the social and professional integration of underprivileged groups, particularly women, the elderly and the disabled. In that connection, there is no doubt that the partnership between civil society and the private sector is being strongly encouraged.

I am not unaware that many delegations may wonder about the current situation with regard to socio-economic development in Chad following the exploitation of oil there. The fact that Chad joined the small circle of oil exporting countries two years ago, although it caused some euphoria in my country, has

not attracted the expected financial resources. Unfortunately, Chad, under the agreements linking it to the oil consortium, benefits from only a small proportion of the revenues resulting from its oil. We continue to need the cooperation and assistance of friendly countries to supplement our resources, which still fall short of our needs. Such cooperation is essential if we are to carry out our development and anti-poverty programmes.

As members are aware, my country's development depends partly on the cotton crop, which unfortunately is in a state of crisis that is becoming endemic. That crop, which provides a living for much of Chad's population, is dangerously threatened by the protectionist practices of developed countries. In fact, our cotton producers are victims of the subsidy policies of countries that are supposed to comply with the rules of international trade. Measures must be taken to limit the effects of the market economy, which is increasingly restricting our weak economies. We believe that well-regulated economic trade would ensure sustainable development for the least advanced countries and would help to build confidence among States.

We are uncertain of reaching a political solution to the cotton problem, despite the hopes placed in continued multilateral trade negotiations within the framework of the Doha Round. It is no longer certain that developed countries will agree to abandon their subsidy practices and implement radical changes in the current system to meet the expectations of African cotton growers. That would leave no choice but to resort to political and legal action under the provisions of the statutes and rules of the World Trade Organization with a view to regulating the cotton market through measures to compensate the losses suffered by our producers.

Most Member States had hoped that this sixtieth session of the General Assembly would finally achieve the democratization of the United Nations. That does not yet seem to be the case. But we must not lose momentum, and we must continue to work to ensure that that objective is attained in the near future. The revitalization of the General Assembly and of the Economic and Social Council and the transformation of the Commission on Human Rights into an important United Nations body, as suggested by the Secretary-General, would enable the Organization to be more effective. In such a restructuring, which remains relevant, the issue of Security Council expansion is of interest to Member States, particularly those of Africa — and quite rightly, because we know that since the creation of the United Nations in 1945, no African State has had a seat on the Council as a permanent member with the right of the veto. That injustice seriously mars the credibility of the United Nations, and it is time to rectify it.

Our position regarding a new configuration for the Security Council remains that which has been reaffirmed many times by the African Union. It reflects our firm will to participate in the efforts of the international community under United Nations auspices aimed at ensuring the maintenance of peace and security, which are guarantees for sustainable economic and social development.

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): I now call on His Excellency The Honourable Godfrey Smith, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Defence and National Emergency Management Organization of Belize.

Mr. Smith (Belize): We congratulate the President of the General Assembly on the assumption of his office. His extensive experience in multilateral affairs will undoubtedly be an invaluable asset in our work.

The 2005 world summit has clearly demonstrated that, in five years, we have not given poverty eradication the highest priority on our international agenda.

It is clear that in too many countries the Millennium Development Goals will not be realized; in some, the situation is worse than five years ago. How then do we assure the marginalized people of our world that we are serious about achieving the Millennium Development Goals by the year 2015? The only way is by showing that there is the global political will to use the outcome document as a platform for action.

In his report "In larger freedom", Kofi Annan stressed that the priority objectives of the United Nations over the coming years should be to secure for people "freedom from want" and "freedom from fear". What is often not recognized is that a person who is not free from want can only live in fear.

The greatest evil — the most effective and consuming terrorism of our age — is the terrorism of abject poverty. It is a poverty in which millions of people live in terror because they know that sooner, not

later, they might die from hunger or from preventable diseases.

Every day in our region of Central America and the Caribbean, our people face threats to their human security: from AIDS, drug trafficking, trafficking in human persons, crushing poverty and growing inequality.

A new security approach is therefore required to contain these threats. We must promote the humanization of security rather than embark on efforts to militarize globalization. We must focus on stopping the deaths that occur every day, most often from preventable causes. Global security cannot be built on a minefield of poverty and disease.

Prioritizing human security does not mean neglecting national sovereignty or State security. As part of our national security strategy, we remain committed to fostering a culture of peace and the peaceful resolution of conflicts.

In the Middle East, we are encouraged by the Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip. We join others in calling upon the Government of Israel to continue the withdrawal from all Palestinian territories. We look forward to the implementation of its commitments in accordance with the road map that will lead to the realization of two independent States, Palestine and Israel, coexisting side by side in peace and security.

The 23 million people on Taiwan also deserve to live in peace and security. We therefore continue to urge the United Nations to take up the plea of Taiwan to participate in this world body. Taiwan has earned its place among the community of nations.

Belize continues to be plagued by an anachronistic claim to its territory from our neighbour Guatemala. But, encouragingly, earlier this month Belize and Guatemala signed a new agreement under the auspices of .he Organization of American States. Under that agreement, if we are unable to resolve the dispute through negotiations, the Secretary-General of the Organization of American States can then recommend that we submit our differences to an international juridical body. We therefore hope that we can ensure the early and final resolution of this dispute, so that we can cooperate more effectively to combat our common problems of poverty and underdevelopment.

We all recognize that there can be no security without development. The world summit outcome document maintains the vision of development elaborated in the Millennium Declaration, the Monterrey Consensus, the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and other outcomes, including the Mauritius Strategy.

If we are to make measurable progress in development, we must urgently implement the global partnership for development. That global partnership involves returning development issues to the forefront of trade negotiations. Without a deeper commitment from developed countries to trade regimes that are more just, the future of the sugar and banana industries in countries such as Belize hangs in the balance. We must therefore spare no effort to ensure that the latest Doha development round concludes on terms favourable to developing countries like Belize.

As a coastal nation with a significant population in low-lying areas, my country emphasizes the need for new action to ensure environmental sustainability, particularly as it relates to climate change. We agree with the Secretary-General that:

> "One of the greatest environmental and development challenges in the twenty-first century will be that of controlling and coping with climate change." (*A/59/2005, para. 60*)

The increased temperatures occasioned by climate change are likely to lead to greater frequency of life-threatening weather systems. The most vulnerable to these changes will be small island developing States and coastal nations like Belize. It is therefore incumbent upon the international community to improve the framework for action to cope with climate change. The eleventh session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change is an opportunity to forge wider and more inclusive cooperation to address that grave danger.

So much of what we hope to achieve depends on a United Nations that is effective and credible. Some recent reports point to systemic problems throughout the United Nations Organization. These, in our view, provide evidence of an Organization that is flawed — not one that is irrelevant. Belize therefore continues to view the United Nations as an indispensable Organization. It is the only global Organization that has the capacity to meaningfully foster peace, security and sustainable development for the peoples of our world.

But the United Nations must reinvent itself to meet the needs of today's geopolitics and unique global challenges. The General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council must be revitalized and strengthened. Similarly, the Security Council must be reformed to make it more accountable, inclusive and representative of the current membership of the United Nations.

The establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission and of the Human Rights Council are important, but we must define ways in which these bodies can reinforce the work of the other principal organs of the United Nations.

In the five years that have elapsed since the year 2000, our collective lack of political will has resulted in the loss of millions of children, women and men to hunger, disease, HIV/AIDS and other preventable causes. But we can halt and reverse that trend. We must give a reformed United Nations, as the ultimate expression of multilateralism, the means to carry out its mandate, as set out in Article I of the Charter: "To achieve international cooperation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural or humanitarian character".

Our world is besieged by such problems. We can carry out this mandate by implementing all the commitments we have made since the year 2000, or we can ignore them and condemn many millions more to live in misery or die in pain. The choice is ours.

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): I now call on His Excellency Mr. Rogatien Biaou, Minister for Foreign Affairs and African Integration of Benin.

Mr. Biaou (Benin) (*spoke in French*): Allow me first of all to pay tribute to Mr. Jean Ping, who guided the work of the fifty-ninth session of the General Assembly with great energy. He had the tremendous responsibility of negotiating the United Nations reforms adopted by our heads of State or Government on Friday, 16 September. We commend him on his courage, his faith in the future of the United Nations and the wisdom and vision with which he discharged his functions.

The tasks facing Mr. Jan Eliasson are inspiring and crucially important. His presidency marks the beginning of the implementation phase of the major decisions taken by our heads of State or Government on reform. We are grateful to him for focusing the work of the sixtieth session on this topic.

My delegation has another good reason to be pleased at seeing Mr. Eliasson presiding over our work: the importance his country attaches to development issues and its very sizeable contribution to the efforts of the international community to eliminate poverty throughout the world. Our two countries, Benin and Sweden, successfully co-chaired the General Assembly's Open-ended Working Group on an Agenda for Development. All of this bodes well for this session.

The eradication of poverty tops the priority list of the Benin Government. In this context, we negotiated and adopted, with the Bretton Woods institutions, a Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper. Its effective implementation, jointly with our Government's plan of action and our national studies on long-term prospects, entitled "Benin 2005: ALAFIA", should set into motion progress that will bring about the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. However, it will still be necessary for the efforts carried out with our bilateral and multilateral development partners to converge to improve the situation in the seven critical areas for making aid to least developed countries effective. These are: substantially reducing the external debt burden of least developed countries so they can devote greater domestic resources to eliminating poverty; strengthening institutional capacity to attract foreign direct investment and develop free enterprise; diversifying the destinations of foreign direct investment; promoting public sector/private sector partnership in least developed countries to promote rural development; strengthening the impact of remittances from our diaspora; the promotion of South-South investment to improve the availability of products on markets; and, strengthening the potential of microcredit to eliminate poverty.

We are gratified at the decision taken in Gleneagles, Scotland, by the Group of Eight (G-8) to completely cancel the debt of 18 highly indebted poor countries, 13 of which are least developed countries. We urgently appeal to donor countries to seriously consider the possibility of extending the benefit of this new positive measure to all least developed countries.

The Coordinating Bureau of the Least Developed Countries, which my country has had the honour of chairing since 2002, will continue consulting with

international financial institutions and development partners in close cooperation with the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, to bring about meaningful progress in all these areas. This is the context of the ministerial conference of the least developed countries on remittances from migrant workers. The conference will be held in Cotonou, Benin, in February 2006, not in October 2005 as originally planned. In the context of this conference, the 50 least developed countries are planning to set up an international monitoring body for funds transfers by migrant workers; it will be open to all States. We urge all United Nations Member States to support this initiative, which is intended to strengthen the impact of these transferred resources on the development of recipient countries.

In addition to these considerations that directly affect the least developed countries, there is an urgent need to promote and give appropriate weight to the development agenda within the context of multilateral trade negotiations in the World Trade Organization and to translate into deeds the firm commitments by the countries concerned on the elimination of agricultural subsidies, in particular those for cotton, to which my country attaches particular importance. Such a measure would remove a considerable handicap on developing countries' efforts to fully take advantage of their comparative advantages in order to become fully integrated into the world economy. We reaffirm that it is indispensable that access to world markets be coupled with measures to strengthen the supply of products from developing countries through adequate support for the local processing of commodities.

No initiative, no measure, no activity and no decision in the field of development can be successful without peace. It is of particular concern that, on essential matters such as disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, the United Nations cannot forge the required consensus to secure the long-term survival of our planet in view of the potential for self-destruction that has built up. These questions should be considered calmly, with the higher interests of humankind in mind, setting aside the particular interest of any country in pursuing some hypothetical power that would reduce security for each and every one of us.

Benin has no objection to the peaceful use of nuclear power to serve the energy needs of the planet, but it feels that any effort to divert peaceful programmes to military programmes runs counter to a vision of collective security based on promoting disarmament and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

Our heads of State or Government decided to confirm the Security Council's key role as the organ with primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. We urge all members of the Assembly to commit themselves to ensuring that the Security Council is expanded to make it more representative and better able to counter old and new threats to international peace and security.

In the 60 years of existence of the United Nations, the Security Council has with varying degrees of success, worked to manage and settle armed conflicts. It has been able to respond to breaches of international peace and security, but it has not always been able to take action to stop or reverse events that have led to an explosion of violence or armed conflict. Given the loss of human life and the massive destruction of property as a result of current threats, it is high time for the Security Council to attach higher priority to conflict prevention, in the spirit of Article 34 of the Charter, which states that

> "The Security Council may investigate any dispute, or any situation which might lead to international friction or give rise to a dispute, in order to determine whether the continuance of the dispute or situation is likely to endanger the maintenance of international peace and security".

If we look at the spirit and the letter of this provision, the Security Council is definitely competent to analyse and monitor situations involving the risk of conflict or a breach of the peace anywhere in the world and to become actively involved in managing crises before conflict breaks out or threats materialize. It is in that light that we must view Security Council resolution 1625 (2005), adopted at the 14 September 2005 Council summit at the initiative of the three African members of the Security Council, led by my country, Benin.

In the context of Security Council reform, the General Assembly should consider the subject of a proactive approach and reflect on how to structure support mechanisms in order to enable the Council to effectively play its role in the prevention of conflicts and of threats to international peace and security.

Peace remains an invaluable and incalculable good. We share the concerns expressed recently by the Secretary-General at the launch of his Alliance of Civilizations initiative. That constructive initiative should be made part of the framework of activities to counter threats to our world, including terrorism, whose predominant religious ties lend credence to theories of a clash of civilizations leading to certain chaos. Benin supports the Alliance of Civilizations initiative, which aims to restore peace in our hearts and among religions so that weapons will fall silent and our peoples will be able to express their aspirations for peace.

We join the quest for peace of those peoples who lack peace today. We express our solidarity with peoples suffering armed conflicts in Africa, the Middle East, Asia, Latin America and Europe. The Organization must redouble its efforts to help them procure national concord, understanding and cohesion.

In that context, we are pursuing a thoroughgoing campaign against the recruitment and the use of children in armed conflicts. Now that the Security Council has adopted its resolution 1612 (2005), the General Assembly, for its part, should establish an open-ended working group to consider proposals for actions to redefine that scourge as a crime against humanity instead of a war crime. We are counting on everyone's support to make that initiative a reality.

In the Middle East, the withdrawal of the occupying Power from the Gaza Strip and part of the West Bank brings us closer, fortunately, to our common vision of an independent State of Palestine living side by side with the State of Israel within secure and internationally recognized borders. We believe that the Quartet's road map can lead the Israeli and Palestinian peoples to that goal. We call upon their leaders to remain committed to the route of peace.

We ask the same of Iraqi leaders and urge them to spare no effort to ensure that all Iraqi communities participate in the transition process leading to the restoration of peace and the strengthening of the country's unity. We make the same appeal to Afghanistan, Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire, among others.

In the same spirit of dialogue, we welcome the significant progress made in resolving the conflicts of West Africa through the cooperation between the United Nations and the Economic Community of West African States aimed at promoting dynamic peacebuilding processes for the gradual return of normality in the countries affected by conflict and for preventing the spread of conflict, through an integrated, regional approach.

We invite all Ivorian parties to overcome their differences of view and give peace and stability a chance in the West African subregion. The holding of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region and the remarkable success achieved by the transition processes in the Central African Republic and Burundi have restored the prospects of the entire region. We encourage the countries concerned to reach a regional agreement for peace, security, good governance and development in the framework of the second regional summit, to be held in Nairobi, and to scrupulously implement that agreement in order to promote peace, stability and prosperity in the region.

Those regional initiatives require enhanced assistance from the international community if the transition in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is to be a success. In that context, Benin intends to pursue its policy of active participation in peacekeeping operations. Our country stands ready to increase its contribution to the international community's efforts in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in order to support the democratic transition process under way.

In East Africa, the United Nations and the African Union have formed an unprecedented partnership to restore peace in the Sudan and put an end to the humanitarian crisis in Darfur, in the spirit of Chapter VIII of the Charter. Such a partnership is essential also in Somalia. In that context, it is in the interest of the United Nations to assist the African Union in establishing and organizing its peacekeeping capacities, in particular by strengthening the structures for planning and for training national and subregional contingents of the African standby force.

Another essential element to which we attach great importance, and which we hope to see realized promptly, relates to the decision taken by our heads of State or Government on the establishment of a standing police force. The establishment of such a force should take into consideration the need for linguistic balance in accordance with short-term and medium-term deployment needs. The modalities of the force's composition should be defined promptly. To that end, we propose carrying out a rapid evaluation of present worldwide human resources and of Member States'

capacity to train police officers. A rational process in that area would consist of taking best advantage of those capacities and giving all Member States an equal opportunity for participation in the new force.

Beyond peacemaking action, the need to help countries emerging from armed conflict remain on the path of peace and overcome the risk of relapse constitutes a real challenge to which we have adequately responded through our reflections on the role of the United Nations. That is the reason behind the Peacebuilding Commission. The consensus on this question does honour to the Organization. The Commission must become operational as soon as possible to strengthen action to assist countries that have undertaken particularly difficult democratic transitions, such as Burundi, the Central African Republic and Guinea-Bissau, if their Governments request such assistance.

Countries facing an ongoing state of social emergency can improve their chances for lasting stability only if the international community mobilizes the necessary resources to help restore a minimum of normality by ensuring that those States can exercise their sovereign rights in the areas of security and the provision of essential social services such as health care, child education, transport and access to financial resources.

The success of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes in all their aspects is decisive for making a peace process irreversible and for guarding against the risk of the spread of conflict caused by the dispersion of former combatants that have not successfully reintegrated into productive civil society. The international community must ensure that the reintegration component of those programmes also receives adequate financing.

In the same context, the Human Rights Council must take its place in the machinery of the United Nations. Its mandate, size, structure and operational procedures must take into account the requirements of representativity, credibility and effectiveness by drawing all lessons from the experience and the practices of the Commission on Human Rights, which it is intended to replace. In that regard, the new Council must become the preferred instrument for identifying cases in which the international community should exercise its responsibility to protect populations. In that regard, the Human Rights Council also has a crucial role to play as an early-warning structure within the United Nations system and as a key element of its conflict-prevention machinery.

We cannot conclude without underlining our full support for the excellent idea of the Government of Sweden to create a network of heads of State and other world leaders to monitor effective implementation of United Nations reform.

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): I now call on Her Excellency Mrs. Rita Kieber-Beck, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Principality of Liechtenstein.

Mrs. Kieber-Beck (Liechtenstein): One week ago, the world summit sent a message of hope for peace, development and human rights for all, and took a number of steps towards institutional reform at the United Nations. The summit meeting has achieved much. It has also left a lot undone and has not met our expectations in several areas. We agree with the General Assembly President's assessment that only the work we do over the next few months will allow us a final assessment of the value of the outcome document.

The summit certainly did not achieve the comprehensive breakthrough we had hoped for. We therefore look forward to working under the President's guidance on the follow-up and implementation and welcome the fact that he has started this process immediately. Institutional change must be the focus of our attention over the next few months, both through the creation of new bodies and the adaptation of existing ones. We will give particular attention to the Human Rights Council, the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Secretariat.

We shared the general relief at the last-minute agreement on the outcome document, since a lack of such agreement would have been disastrous. We had created expectations that were much higher than what we could have possibly achieved, at a time when the United Nations seemed more in need of reform than ever before. The reputation and the worldwide image of the United Nations is clearly not what it used to be — the oil-for-food scandal, cases of sexual exploitation by United Nations peacekeepers, inaction in the face of mass crimes and humanitarian crises have overshadowed the many success stories that this Organization has to tell.

It is important to move on from the oil-for-food scandal. Moving on, however, must not mean that we ignore, yet again, the fact that the massive abuse and mismanagement revealed in the Volcker reports are but one expression of what is a systemic problem. Too much went wrong in the oil-for-food programme, and everybody involved failed in their responsibilities in one way or another, including the Security Council. No bureaucracy can be changed overnight, as we all know from our national experience; but it is clear that only a more accountable Secretariat, one that works without undue pressure from us, the Member States, can restore the confidence of the peoples it is meant to serve.

Accountability must also be a key principle for the intergovernmental bodies and thus guide us in our work on the relevant reforms. We are concerned at the increasingly skewed institutional balance within the Organization. The Security Council has clearly taken on a role that goes far beyond the central place it was given under the Charter. Indeed, its activities are increasingly venturing into the domains reserved for the General Assembly, in particular.

This entails a twofold risk. On the one hand, many countries increasingly feel a lack of ownership of the Organization, although collective ownership based on the principle of sovereign equality is one of the cornerstones of the Organization. On the other hand, the Security Council is at risk of being paralysed by the sheer amount of issues on its agenda. The answer to this challenge is clear: we need a stronger General Assembly that asserts its central role and carries out its functions effectively. In parallel, the Security Council must become more transparent and accountable in order to truly carry out its functions on behalf of the entire membership.

The lack of a solution to the complex issue of Security Council reform is a disappointment to many. Enlargement and a more representative Council are clear necessities, and we will do our part to achieve an early solution, with the strongest possible political support. In addition, and not less importantly, we must also improve the working methods of the Security Council, as stated in the World Summit Outcome (*resolution 60/1*). Transparency, accountability and stronger involvement of States that are not members of the Council are of decisive importance to enable it to truly act on behalf of the membership, as mandated by the Charter. We will work hard for early and concrete results, since effective changes in the daily workings of the Council would benefit the entire membership.

We routinely repeat our annual call for a stronger General Assembly. Small steps are taken every year, and all of them are important. It appears to us, however, that the most essential efforts to revitalize the General Assembly do not come from measures contained in General Assembly resolutions. Rather, Member States must ensure that the Assembly is seized with truly relevant topics that are treated efficiently and effectively. We may deplore the migration of topics to the Security Council that we think should be dealt with instead by the General Assembly. This trend, however, will continue unabated unless the Assembly proves to be a central decision-making body that takes its responsibilities seriously. The Assembly is what we, as Member States, want it to be. A genuine and sustained effort is, therefore, required from all of us.

We continue to fully support the early establishment of a Human Rights Council to replace the Commission on Human Rights. Like others, we were disappointed at the meagre substance on this topic that found its way into the outcome document. The Organization needs a standing body that effectively promotes human rights worldwide, swiftly responds to gross and systematic violations of human rights and reflects the importance of human rights for this Organization. Close cooperation with a strengthened Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights will be essential. The Council must not duplicate the work carried out by other bodies, in particular the General Assembly. It must, therefore, not be a remake of the Commission on Human Rights with a new label. We look forward to working with the presidency towards an early solution that would add concrete value for the protection and promotion of human rights.

Mr. Loizaga (Paraguay), Vice-President, took the Chair.

We consider the recognition of the "responsibility to protect" as one of the most positive elements in the outcome document. The main obligation for its implementation naturally falls to the Security Council. The Council has to ensure that disgraceful inaction, such as in the case of the genocide in Rwanda, cannot ever occur again. When the lives of innocent civilians are at stake, such a responsibility must not be compromised by political considerations. Collective

action to prevent and respond to genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes must, therefore, not be made impossible by a veto or threat of veto by one of the permanent members of the Council. We hope that the Council will stand up to the challenge raised by the summit. The membership as a whole clearly has a shared obligation in this respect.

Our achievement in the Summit Outcome on the "responsibility to protect" stands in stark contrast to our silence on the importance of fighting impunity for the worst crimes of international concern. More progress has been made in this area in the past few years than in almost any other area of international relations. Transitional justice is now an inevitable element of any serious effort to help societies in post-conflict situations. There is now a close and well-established relationship between the International Criminal Court and the United Nations, in particular after the Security Council decision to mandate the Court to investigate the crimes in Darfur. We trust that efforts to fight impunity will remain a high priority for the Organization, recognizing the central role of the International Criminal Court in that respect.

While it may be premature to pronounce a final judgement on the value of the outcome document, one thing can be said with certainty: that document is a reflection of what is agreeable five years after the Millennium Summit. It is remarkable how uneven progress has been in several areas. Major advances, such as the decision to fill an institutional void by creating a Peacebuilding Commission, are accompanied by major failures, such as the absence of any agreement in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation. We have no choice but to build on the positive elements of the Summit Outcome and to find early solutions to institutional questions, in particular. Progress in those areas should help us to intensify our work and eventually to find agreement on unresolved questions in vital areas such as disarmament and non-proliferation. In this way, we can make the summit a turning point in the history of the United Nations.

Two years ago, the Secretary-General said that we had reached a fork in the road; that observation was repeated many times during the process leading up to the summit. So where are we today? Looking back at what we have achieved, it seems that we have taken the advice of Yogi Berra, one of the great legends of the City of New York, who said: "When you come to a fork in the road, take it!"

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Lyonpo Khandu Wangchuk, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Bhutan.

Mr. Wangchuk (Bhutan): Allow me to begin by extending my delegation's warmest congratulations to the President upon his assumption of the office of the presidency of the General Assembly at its sixtieth session. We have full confidence in his ability to guide our deliberations to a successful conclusion. I also pay tribute to his predecessor, Mr. Jean Ping, for skilfully conducting the work of the fifty-ninth session of the General Assembly and for his efforts in preparing the High-level Plenary Meeting, held from 14 to 16 September 2005.

It is appropriate that the theme for the sixtieth session of the General Assembly is "For a stronger and more effective United Nations: the follow-up and implementation of the High-level Plenary Meeting in September 2005".

Indeed, this session has the responsibility to implement the decisions of the High-level Plenary Meeting. Our leaders have clearly pronounced that the goals and objectives of the Millennium Summit and other United Nations conferences and summits represent the minimum required to deal with the issues and challenges of our time. Their message is that 2005 should be a year for concrete action to deliver on those goals and objectives. We must, therefore, summon political will and assume moral responsibility to work truly for the benefit of our peoples on whose behalf we gather at the United Nations year after year.

In the report "In larger freedom: towards development, security and human rights for all" (*A/59/2005*), the Secretary-General argues that the principles and purposes of the United Nations contained in the Charter remain as valid and relevant today as they were in 1945 and that what is now required is for practice and organization to move with the times. My delegation fully agrees with that view. Our work must always be guided by the Charter, but our approach must adapt to changing circumstances and challenges. In doing so, we must move beyond narrow national perspectives and interests and treat all issues in a balanced and holistic manner.

As I stated at the High-level Plenary Meeting last week, my delegation supports all initiatives to strengthen the United Nations and its institutions. Of

significant interest to my delegation is the strengthening of this Assembly, which is the only universal body in the United Nations. There is a clear consensus within the membership on the need for urgent and wide-ranging reform of the United Nations, although differences remain on the nature and extent of reform. The 2005 World Summit Outcome has entrusted the sixtieth session with implementation of certain reform decisions and at the same time with carrying out further discussions and negotiations in areas where consensus has not been reached. We must continue with our efforts to find consensus in those areas.

Among the issues that are unresolved is the reform of the Security Council. We have debated this issue for well over a decade, but have not yet reached a decision. My country continues to call for early action to enlarge the permanent and non-permanent membership of the Security Council and to improve its working methods. In this context, we reiterate our support to include Brazil, Germany, India and Japan as permanent members. Those countries have demonstrated their capacity and will to contribute to world peace and security. We also believe that Africa should be adequately represented by permanent membership on the Council.

Development is the most immediate and pressing issue for the vast majority of Member States. No other issue can be as central as development when millions live in deprivation and despair; and global peace and security cannot be truly achieved without advancing development. In fact, partnership in other areas cannot be sustained without genuine international cooperation in development.

The shortfalls in our commitments to the Millennium Summit and other major United Nations conferences and summits are all too clear. More needs to be done urgently to address the hurdles of development, which range from finance to debt, trade, global governance and systemic issues, the environment and science and technology.

Adequate and predictable sources of financing are crucial for the success of development efforts. We therefore welcome ideas for innovative sources of funding and calls for increased official development assistance (ODA). In this regard, my delegation would like to commend those countries that have achieved or exceeded the ODA target of 0.7 per cent of gross national product (GNP). We welcome the timetable established by some countries to achieve the ODA target by 2015 and urge others to do so expeditiously. We also urge that 0.2 per cent of GNP be allocated to least developed countries to enable them to achieve the goals and objectives of the Brussels Programme of Action and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The recent decision of the Group of 8 (G-8) to cancel the external debt of 18 highly indebted poor countries, including 13 least developed countries, is a welcome move. My delegation is hopeful that the same consideration will be given to all least developed countries.

As a small, least developed and landlocked country, Bhutan sees official development assistance as its primary source of financing for development. In this regard, my delegation would like to place on record its deep appreciation of the bilateral and multilateral partners that are actively supporting our development efforts. Despite a significant increase in its own resources, my country will have to rely on ODA for some time in its efforts to realize the MDGs as well as for overall development.

The continued support of the international community for our development efforts is crucial at the present juncture. Decades of gradual but deliberate change in the system of governance of the country, spearheaded by His Majesty King Jigme Singye Wangchuck, are entering a critical phase. A draft constitution for the country is currently under discussion. Its adoption in the near future will transform the country into a parliamentary democracy. For this system of governance to succeed, it is imperative that the country be able to maintain the current level of progress in the social, economic and other fields.

My country attaches great importance to the conservation and protection of the environment, as human life is fundamentally dependent on natural systems and resources. There cannot be sustainable development without environmental sustainability. We must commit ourselves to meeting the goals of, inter alia, the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Agenda 21 and the Kyoto Protocol. In Bhutan, we have made serious efforts to integrate the principles and practices of environmental sustainability into our development policies and programmes. As a result of our conservation efforts, Bhutan has successfully maintained 72.5 per cent of its land area under forest

cover. Our modest achievement in this area was duly recognized by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in April 2005 when it awarded to His Majesty the King and the people of Bhutan a UNEP Champions of the Earth 2005 award.

My country fully supports the establishment of a worldwide early warning system for all natural hazards. Situated in a very fragile mountain ecosystem, Bhutan is prone to glacial floods and other natural disasters, including earthquakes. The solidarity that the international community demonstrated last year when many countries in the Indian Ocean rim were devastated by the tsunami was exemplary and is worth replicating in other areas.

Terrorism is a pernicious threat to peace and security. It cannot be justified under any circumstances. It is imperative for the international community to act resolutely to root out this menace. We condemn terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. Bhutan supports all efforts to conclude a comprehensive convention on international terrorism and other initiatives. Small and poor developing countries are particularly vulnerable and are in need of international support to fight terrorism. They are also vulnerable to transnational crime and need assistance to deal with it.

International migration is on the increase today. Migration offers opportunities and at the same time presents serious challenges to both source and recipient countries. Associated with it is the problem of illegal immigration, which presents serious challenges, particularly to small countries such as my own. It is therefore important for a high-level dialogue on international migration and development to be held by the General Assembly in 2006 to address all issues associated with migration.

My delegation supports the Secretary-General's continuing efforts to organize annual multilateral treaty events in conjunction with General Assembly sessions. In this context, we are pleased to report to the Assembly that Bhutan acceded to the following treaties last week: the United Nations Convention against Corruption; the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict; and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography.

Bhutan, as a responsible Member State, fully upholds all relevant international treaties and conventions. However, our desire to accede to them is consistently constrained by lack of capacity to deal with the range of issues they contain and by the difficulties of meeting reporting and other obligations. This is a serious hurdle faced by many small countries, especially least developed countries. There is a genuine need to look at ways to simplify reporting and other obligations and to provide technical and financial assistance to countries in need.

We must heed the call of the Secretary-General who has said,

> "Our action must be as urgent as the need, and on the same scale. ... Only by acting decisively now can we both confront the pressing security challenges and win a decisive victory in the global battle against poverty by 2015". (*A/59/2005, para. 23*)

We believe that the time to act is now. We must not let the opportunity slip. I wish the General Assembly continued success at this session.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to Her Excellency Ms. Rosemary Banks, chairperson of the delegation of New Zealand.

Ms. Banks (New Zealand): Sixty years ago, Prime Minister Peter Fraser of New Zealand told representatives to the San Francisco Conference that its sole aim should be

> "the setting up of a world organization that will really work, and that will be the background for an orderly progress towards security, prosperity and happiness for all the people of all nations".

The new organization would only work, he said, if its members were determined to stand by their commitments and principles.

Today the essential concept of the United Nations remains robust. We can be justly proud of its achievements in many areas including humanitarian assistance, development and peacekeeping. But we have collectively underperformed in others, sometimes with tragic results.

Our task this sixtieth anniversary is twofold: first, to recommit ourselves as Member States to the enduring vision and values of the Charter and,

secondly, to retool the United Nations machinery to meet the challenges of the twenty-first century.

The Summit Outcome (*resolution 60/1*) provides the blueprint for the way forward. New Zealand would have liked more progress in a number of areas, such as more detailed agreement on the establishment of the Human Rights Council and more authority to the Secretary-General to manage resources in return for greater accountability. We deeply regret the failure to endorse further disarmament and non-proliferation measures.

But we are encouraged by the many significant advances, including recognition of the need for more and better aid, establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission, a doubling of resources for the Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights and the recognition of our shared "responsibility to protect".

We have as our theme for the General Assembly implementation of our summit undertakings. We share accountability for getting the job done. I shall confine my comments here to the results of the summit.

New Zealand is pleased with the Summit Outcome as it relates to development. It represents a shared commitment by all Member States to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and recognizes the important partnership between developed and developing countries in the effective use of aid.

This year New Zealand has increased its development assistance by 23 per cent. Our official development assistance (ODA) programme has a focus on poverty elimination, with a core, but not exclusive, focus on the Pacific. We strive to address aid effectiveness, the particular problems faced by small island developing States, HIV/AIDS, the empowerment of women, sexual and reproductive health and rights, education for all, sustainable development and trade access.

On trade, we look forward to an ambitious outcome across all aspects of the Doha Development Agenda, including in agriculture, improved market access, the elimination of export subsidies and substantial reductions in trade distorting domestic support. Improving the coherence of trade policies and development initiatives remains a critical element in achieving the MDGs.

New Zealand welcomes the decision to establish a Peacebuilding Commission to help break the cycle of conflict by better coordinating long-term international recovery efforts and ensuring sustained political attention to those who need it. We must now move swiftly to get the Commission up and running by December this year. We look to the General Assembly President to take a lead in holding consultations to achieve this. The core elements of the framework have already been discussed at length and in detail. With good will and determination, we can surely arrive at agreement within the next few weeks on a package. This should ensure balanced membership and flexible reporting arrangements. We would caution against raising the bar for assistance too high, and we hope that all States in need of help will be able to approach the Commission.

Our leaders have spoken with one voice and unequivocally to condemn all forms of terrorism. We must build on this and honour our undertaking to conclude negotiations on the comprehensive convention on international terrorism at this session. New Zealand will continue to work closely with our friends in the Pacific region to improve our collective abilities to identify, prevent or respond to terrorist threats. Consolidating reporting requirements created by Security Council resolutions would, we believe, be one step towards enhancing the counter-terrorism programme of the United Nations. We think it very important that Member States should now support the Secretary-General's counter-terrorism strategy.

One of the most far-reaching achievements of the summit, as many countries have acknowledged, is our collective acceptance that there is a responsibility to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. We must now all be prepared to assist the United Nations in establishing the early warning capability referred to in our outcome document. It is vital that, when the need arises, we give effect to our resolve and follow the principles we have agreed upon.

In this context, New Zealand wishes to reaffirm its commitment to ending impunity for those responsible for the most serious crimes of concern to the international community. Adoption of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court was an historic moment for the United Nations and one that demonstrated the breadth and depth of political will to end impunity and to secure the rule of law.

The absence of any reference to a commitment to end impunity or of any acknowledgement of the International Criminal Court's central contribution to this goal is one of several telling silences in our summit outcome.

We are particularly pleased that leaders have recognized the need to conclude, during this session, negotiations on the draft protocol to the Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel. This will be a major priority for New Zealand. We call on all Member States to contribute constructively to this process, so that we can reach agreement on a protocol and demonstrate our full support for the work of United Nations personnel in the field.

New Zealand welcomes the emphasis on human rights in the outcome document. That the budget of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights is to be doubled and her Office strengthened is an overdue recognition of the gap between expectations of delivery and resourcing.

While progress has been made through the summit decision to establish a Human Rights Council, we regret that the opportunity was lost to reach agreement on details of the Council's mandate and operation, despite the support of a great majority of Members for such a package. A small minority cannot be allowed to veto the establishment of the Council.

Over the next weeks we must redouble our efforts to translate that broad support into specifics on what the Council will look like and on its mandate. We shall look to the President to set a work programme that will aim for agreement on the details.

Our second human rights priority for the sixtieth session is to see negotiations completed on the draft convention on the rights of persons with disabilities. The constructive and collegial spirit of delegations in the Ad Hoc Committee on the rights of persons with disabilities has been extraordinary. New Zealand is confident that it will be possible to conclude the negotiations in 2006 if the Ad Hoc Committee is enabled to meet for three weeks next January.

Our ability to strengthen the United Nations across the board in development, security and human rights will be enhanced by implementing summit undertakings on Secretariat and management reform. We need particularly to improve the managerial effectiveness and accountability of the Secretary-General. He should be given, as he has requested, the tools that he needs to manage the Secretariat.

We strongly support the review of all budgetary and human resource rules and regulations and the review of mandates. We support also the increased focus on ensuring ethical conduct on the part of all United Nations personnel. We believe a system-wide code of ethics and an independent ethics office would facilitate that. New Zealand also welcomes the commitment to strengthening the United Nations Office of Internal Oversight Services.

The outcome document calls for early reform of the Security Council, and the General Assembly is to review progress on this issue by the end of the year. New Zealand continues to believe that the Security Council needs to be more effective and more representative for the twenty-first century, although we have no illusions about the difficulties of reaching agreement on this.

We should in the meantime renew our efforts to improve the working methods of the Security Council. For those many Member States who rarely, if ever, occupy a non-permanent seat on the Council, there should be other ways to participate in Council decisions and contribute to discussions.

We, as Member States, have shown in finalizing the summit outcome a mixture of courage and creativity on the one hand and of stubbornness and hesitation on the other. The implementation period ahead gives us a second chance to make good on those moments when we allowed agreements to slip through our fingers. We put our trust in our President to set up the structures for ongoing work and to be the catalyst to motivate and energize us.

In closing, I would like to acknowledge the much valued contribution that former President Ping made over the last year, and we thank him.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now call on His Excellency The Honourable Lorin Robert, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Federated States of Micronesia.

Mr. Robert (Federated States of Micronesia): I take this opportunity to congratulate President Eliasson on his election to lead our deliberations during this very important session of the General Assembly. I would also like to pay tribute to our outgoing President of the fifty-ninth session, His Excellency Mr. Jean

Ping, and our Secretary-General for their tireless efforts and very considerable contributions to the successful outcome of the High-level Plenary Meeting that concluded just a week ago.

This year, at this historic session, we commemorate a milestone in the rich history of the Organization as we celebrate its sixtieth anniversary. For us in Micronesia, the occasion also marks the fifteenth anniversary of our joining the United Nations. We are proud and motivated to be part of this great Organization.

Our celebrations, however, should have a noble purpose beyond honouring the past and the present. This occasion should give focus to the long road ahead of us. Inspired by the accomplishments of the past 60 years, we must forge ahead with strong determination, confidence and vigour to meet the challenges that the future holds for the Organization.

The Federated States of Micronesia does not pretend to believe that the problems that we are called upon to tackle are easy; they are not. But while we have differences of opinion as to how they may be effectively addressed, my delegation is encouraged by the broad consensus that was reached during the high-level panel meetings last week that the reform of the United Nations and the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) must be addressed one way or another and sooner rather than later. No doubt the consensus was forged in the conviction that the United Nations, with all its shortcomings, still represents the best hope for humankind to solve its problems at the multilateral level. If that is the case, as my country firmly believes it is, the Organization must be reformed to reflect present day realities and to effectively and efficiently achieve its enduring objectives as enshrined in the Charter. For the sake of our Organization's credibility, for its long-term sustainability, and for the millions of people around the globe that pin their hopes on the United Nations, the Organization must be reformed. My delegation fully supports the call that has been made within the General Assembly Hall for its comprehensive reform.

Consequently, let us give full consideration to the reform of the Security Council. The challenges of the twenty-first century demand that we should do so. With the indulgence of members, I do not wish to go into details here, as the position of my Government on the issue has already been made known on several occasions. I would only reiterate our call for the inclusion of Japan and Germany, among the developed countries, as permanent members of the Council, because we believe they will contribute greatly to the maintenance of peace and security. For those aforementioned reasons, we also support the inclusion of India, a developing country, as a permanent member of the Security Council. Moreover, we will support the inclusion of other developing countries from other regions, if that reflects the choice of those regions. We urge Member States to take bold and decisive action on this issue.

The time has come for the "enemy State" clauses in the United Nations Charter to be removed. They have long become obsolete. The outcome document rightfully reflects that fact.

The sixtieth General Assembly could not have been more timely. It can take up the noble but incomplete task of reinforcing and facilitating the full implementation of the outcome of last week's summit. We have little choice but to complete that which was left unfinished.

Consistent with the broader agenda of the debates, we wish to reiterate the great importance that we attach to the second phase of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) to be held in Tunisia in November. For my country, whose population is dispersed on many islands scattered over a vast area of the Pacific, access to affordable and reliable information and communication technologies (ICTs) is critical to the socio-economic advancement of its people. But harnessing the power of ICTs does not benefit only a few. In the end, it is a win-win proposition for us all — for developing and developed countries alike. The responsible use and effective dissemination of meaningful information is the key to emancipation from human ignorance and is therefore essential to socio-economic progress. It follows that the means of collecting, evaluating, and transmitting information must be shared and placed at the service of humankind. It is for that reason that my country continues to add its voice to those of other countries in urging universal cooperation in the WSIS process. It is a step forward along the road to achieving the MDGs. Without it, the MDGs will mean little.

It is for the same reason that my Government supports the Community of Democracies and participates in its activities. In our view,

democratization of the institutions of governance and transparency in public policymaking — with due regard to local conditions — are inseparable from economic progress and collective security. After all, the work of the Community does not contradict but further reinforces the MDGs and, in a larger sense, the time-honoured objectives incorporated in the Charter of the United Nations.

It does not take a great deal of wisdom to realize that, as a small island developing State, my country is vulnerable to the extremely adverse impact of global climate change. For the 15 years we have been a Member of the United Nations, we have been vocal here and elsewhere on the issue of climate change and its adverse impact on small island developing States. For us, it is an issue of security and survival. I reiterate our appeal to those countries that have not yet ratified the Kyoto Protocol to do so immediately and without further delay.

A week ago during the High-level Plenary Meeting, President Joseph Urusemal, like other Micronesian Presidents before him, called attention to the daunting challenges facing our country and other small island developing States in pursuing sustainable development and achieving the MDGs. I reaffirm their calls here once again, and stress the urgent need for the international community to fully and effectively implement the Mauritius Strategy for the further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States. The Strategy provides a way forward for these countries and plays a crucial role in our ability to achieve sustainable development and meet the MDGs.

As if the plethora of challenges I have spoken of are not daunting enough for my country, the escalating cost of fuel and its negative impact on our efforts to meet development goals and pursue sustainable development is a major cause of concern. That crisis brings to the fore the need identified by small island developing States for accelerated research and development and a sharing of technologies in the areas of renewable and alternative sources of energy. We appeal to the international community to assist us in those areas.

I take this opportunity today to reiterate the call made by my President during the High-level Plenary Meeting to further strengthen cooperation and linkages between the United Nations and countries of the Pacific, like mine. The need for the physical presence of the United Nations system and its sustained engagement in our development process is now more compelling than ever. We cannot accept the notion that our country is undeserving of the substantive presence of the United Nations.

Over the past few months we have seen encouraging signs in the Middle East. The historic disengagement of Israel from the Gaza Strip and parts of the West Bank is a step in the right direction and should be commended. My Government appreciates the political obstacles faced by the two parties and encourages them to stay the course towards a peaceful settlement of what has been a long, complex and unpleasant experience. We call upon both parties to spare no effort to actively pursue peaceful negotiations. They should not be satisfied until the day comes when Israeli and Palestinian children can play side by side and live in peace, without fear.

As a young country that graduated from the trusteeship regime of this Organization, my country places high hopes in the United Nations. At 60, the United Nations should not to be contemplating retirement. Instead, the time has come for this great Organization to strengthen and rededicate itself in order to effectively and efficiently meet the challenges of the new millennium.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Phesheya Mbongeni Dlamini, chairman of the delegation of the Kingdom of Swaziland.

Mr. Dlamini (Swaziland): It is an honour and privilege for me to present my country's statement, as commanded by His Majesty King Mswati III.

I am happy to convey the greetings and best wishes of His Majesty King Mswati III, Her Majesty the Queen Mother, and the entire Swazi nation.

On behalf of my delegation, I wish to congratulate Mr. Eliasson on his election as President of the General Assembly at its sixtieth session. The Kingdom of Swaziland is confident that his diplomatic skills and vast experience in international affairs will guide the work of the General Assembly to a successful conclusion as it faces the daunting task of reform and change.

We wish also to recognize the work done by his predecessor, Mr. Jean Ping, Minister of Foreign Affairs

of Gabon, who ably steered the last session so as to set the stage for change in the year 2005. He hands over the leadership of this body at a crucial time — a time when we have to take concrete and firm action to effect such change. We wish him well and every success in his future endeavours.

This is a momentous occasion, as we are celebrating the sixtieth anniversary of the United Nations at a time when we are charting a course and adopting clear guidelines for adapting the Organization to the effective role it must play in the new century. We have also taken on the responsibility and challenge of ensuring that the United Nations of the twenty-first century can make real improvements in the lives of the peoples of the world.

Given the contributions of the United Nations to world peace, economic and social development and the observance of human rights, we are reaffirming our faith in the Organization, and we will continue to work to achieve the objectives of the Charter through the strengthening and revitalization of the United Nations system.

In the last five years, the international community has witnessed a mixed bag of successes, trials and tribulations whose consequences have been felt across the globe. The scale of some of these man-made problems and natural disasters — such as terrorism, war, the tsunami and Hurricane Katrina — was unprecedented.

It is because of some of these incidents that, for the first time in its existence, the United Nations has been challenged in its pivotal role of maintaining global peace, security and safety. Fortunately, the United Nations has remained undeterred, and that is due in particular to the astute leadership of our Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, whose diplomatic skills and efforts to unite — tested as they have been — have managed to keep the Organization focused as it deals with the critical issues confronting the international community today.

For those reasons, the Kingdom of Swaziland believes that this session presents an opportunity for us to advance further the reform process in order not only to make the Organization efficient and effective, but also to ensure that the programmes of action adopted at past global conferences are fully implemented.

We therefore welcome the decisions taken at the recently concluded Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) review summit. These will indeed set us on course to have a significant impact on each and every country's socio-political and economic development.

Our quest for a safer and secure world continues to be challenged. The recent spate of terrorist bombings in various parts of the world is a clear indication that we have to fight that growing scourge with urgency. The adoption of the 13 conventions covering different aspects of terrorism demonstrates our unwavering commitment to this course.

The Kingdom of Swaziland supports the Secretary-General's call for the drafting of a comprehensive instrument that will enable us to collectively and effectively fight terrorism.

Tensions and conflicts within and among States, which are detrimental to development and productivity, continue to affect many parts of the world. Such conflicts are fuelled by the ever-growing illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, which cause the death and displacement of thousands of innocent people every year.

In that regard, the Kingdom of Swaziland supports United Nations efforts to enhance international cooperation to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. We further call for stern action to be taken against the mass production of such arms and weapons, in the same manner as we would deal with drug producers.

In this age of globalization, collective action will be necessary given that no single nation can find its own solutions to the challenges that we face. In that context, we welcome the various initiatives currently under way that are aimed at engaging regional organizations to do their part in responding to challenges within their regions.

These partnerships have been taking shape, and it is now up to us to give them substance by establishing appropriate frameworks, harmonizing methods and pooling capacities and resources for our work.

We in Africa consider cooperation between the African Union and the United Nations as being of great value. For example, peacekeeping and peacebuilding missions continue to enhance peace initiatives in our region. However, I would like to stress here that

peacekeeping operations must go hand in hand with humanitarian efforts, with all of the urgency such situations require.

African leaders have demonstrated their political will, but they lack the resources to resolve crises in Africa. It is for that reason that we appeal to the international community to increase its support for the African Union, so as to enhance its capacity and response mechanism.

The Kingdom of Swaziland supports the call for an integrated approach to conflict resolution on our continent, and we also support the idea that the African Union is the organ best suited to mobilizing the efforts of its members, and, most important of all, to undertaking preventive action before a situation deteriorates.

The Kingdom of Swaziland remains concerned, however, by the conflict in the Middle East, which continues to threaten international peace and security. We believe that the road map holds the key to a positive outcome on the matter and urge the Quartet to continue its efforts to bridge the differences between the parties.

While welcoming the positive efforts by the Government of Israel to withdraw from some parts of the occupied territories, we would urge both parties to make a commitment to a comprehensive cessation of all violence, particularly that aimed at civilians, or else real progress will remain elusive. We remain hopeful that a solution to the conflict is imminent and continue to urge both parties to remain pragmatic and constructive in their quest for a solution.

The recent MDG follow-up summit succeeded in highlighting the plight of Africa with unprecedented clarity. The paradox of Africa is the extreme and increasing poverty of its people, who face many problems, including ill health, in a land so richly endowed with natural resources. This has become increasingly visible over the past decade, while we have seen evidence of a decline in poverty in other parts of the world.

In much of Africa, one of the major causes and consequences of poverty is disease, mainly malaria and HIV/AIDS. These diseases continue to compromise the health situation in African countries, halting and even reversing health gains achieved in earlier years. The poor are caught in a complex poverty trap in which low income leads to low consumption, which in turn results in low capacity and low productivity.

The Kingdom of Swaziland believes that there are relatively affordable technologies in our modern world that can mitigate the effect of disease on the poor. Experience has shown that proven strategies and health interventions can effectively and dramatically reduce the toll of these killer diseases. Fortunately, the MDGs point the way forward.

We believe that the creation of a world solidarity fund to eradicate extreme poverty and an accord within the framework of the World Trade Organization on patents are imperative and would be steps in the right direction, so that our countries can provide medicines to all.

Health is a strong entry point for poverty reduction, and alleviating the disease burden on the poor will contribute to the improvement of their social status.

This year also marks another milestone in the calendar of the movement for gender equality and the advancement of women: the 10-year review of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. In 1995 women gathered in Beijing and took a giant step forward. At that point, gender equality came to be recognized as a critical element of development and peace for each and every country. Some progress has been made. For example, many more girls are now enrolled in primary education. Investing in women is paramount for ensuring sustainable development. During this session, we must strive to meet the challenge that the Charter, established 60 years ago, articulated: the equal rights of men and women.

As we note this progress, we acknowledge the newer challenges that have emerged, such as the effects of the HIV/AIDS pandemic on both women and girls. The HIV/AIDS scourge continues to plague our communities in Africa. The pandemic is as much a medical crisis as it is an economic, social and political crisis. With no cure insight, it will continue to deplete the essential financial and human resources so critical for development. For its part, my Government has been collaborating with local communities to find home-grown solutions to this problem. We continue to be grateful to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria and other international agencies for the assistance and support they continue to provide us in our fight against this killer disease.

There is no doubt that developing countries are determined to fight poverty by creating jobs for our people. As we play our part in the mobilization of domestic resources, I would like to appeal to the developed world to meet its commitments by supporting us. Effective assistance by the international community to enhance the quality of economic choices is necessary, as is firm commitment without conditionalities.

The Kingdom of Swaziland believes that the Doha Development Agenda needs to be seriously advanced, with industrialized countries addressing the needs of developing countries. We call for better access to markets, in particular preferential markets with lowered tariff and non-tariff barriers to trade with industrialized countries.

On the question of reform of the United Nations, the Kingdom of Swaziland supports the wide range of proposals put forward to revitalize our Organization in its management of our affairs. We are of the view that the role of the General Assembly must be significantly strengthened to enable it to fulfil the tasks originally assigned to it by the Charter. The General Assembly, as the most democratic and representative body of the United Nations, should seize this opportunity to take the lead and thus demonstrate that it can express the political will of the people of the world.

In this regard, the Economic and Social Council too should be strengthened and given decision-making powers to implement the United Nations development agenda. We also believe that the Council should continue to be the overall coordinator of all development activities, including the Millennium Development Goals.

As we discuss greater representation and wider participation in the United Nations system, and as we celebrate the sixtieth anniversary of the Organization, allow me to remind all of us gathered here that the more than 23 million people of the Republic of China remain hopeful that their voice in quest of participation in the very important United Nations system will soon be heard and positively responded to, so that they too can make their valuable contributions to the management and prosperity of world affairs. In the meantime, it is our continued hope that the existing issues between the parties will be resolved peacefully.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Alisher Vohidov, Chairman of the delegation of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

Mr. Vohidov (Uzbekistan) (*spoke in Russian*): First of all, let me take this opportunity to congratulate Mr. Jan Eliasson on his election to the high position of President of the General Assembly and to wish him every success in guiding the work of the session. I would also like to thank his predecessor, Mr. Jean Ping, for his able leadership as the President of the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session.

It is obvious that the years-long process of reorganizing the entire system of international relations, in particular reform of the United Nations, has been unreasonably delayed. The 2005 summit was an important stage in exploring mutually acceptable formulas and in adopting goals whose implementation will lead us to the achievement of development and security.

Some of the decisions taken at the summit were medium-term and others long-term in nature. But, in our view, our primary task is to ensure their full implementation and not to allow inertia to impede this, as has been the case in the process of implementing the Millennium Development Goals.

Strengthening the capacity of the United Nations to achieve its goals in the three areas of development, security and human rights requires appropriate and active adaptation of the entire United Nations system. In this connection we consider it important to make the following comments. First, regardless of how important it is to reform and modernize the United Nations, there is, at present, no alternative to the Organization.

Secondly, further delay in reform of the most important bodies of the Organization will negatively impact its role in the modern world. There is a real danger that if the United Nations fails to take action, its coordinating role will gradually pass to other international structures, which lack the degree of broad representation that the United Nations enjoys.

Thirdly, the reform of three main bodies of the United Nations — the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council — should provide balance in their work. In that regard, we consider it to be in our common interest that Security Council reform not be prolonged. It should be carried

out during the main part of the sixtieth session, before the year is out.

Fourthly, regional approaches should be given priority in dealing with development, security and human rights issues. The effectiveness of the principle of moving from regional to global approaches has already been proved on many occasions.

At present, Uzbekistan is implementing its national goals for economic development. It is carrying out economic reforms and taking measures to strengthen regional economic cooperation. However, any national efforts need to be supported by international economic structures. It is important that genuine conditions for an equal and fair international economic order be established. International donors must provide their full support for regional cooperation, and interested developing countries, in turn, need to make that kind of cooperation an integral part of their national strategy.

We believe it important for the concerned regional commissions of the United Nations — the Economic Commission for Europe and the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific — to strengthen their work to assist economic development in Central Asia, with a view to the greater and broader involvement of the countries of the region in international economic relations and investment cooperation. We are of the view that the international community, including the United Nations, should pay serious attention to the question of creating a Central Asian common market capable of ensuring the rational and effective use of the rich potential and resources of the region.

Uzbekistan supports all efforts to ensure sustainable development. Member States should pool their efforts to tackle problems of environmental degradation, shortages of water resources and drinking water and the deterioration of environmental conditions in cities and industrial zones. The global environmental agenda also calls for the pressing issues of desertification, biodiversity and climate change to be addressed.

Acts of terrorism carried out in many regions of the world, including Central Asia, have once again reminded us of the need for a critical assessment of the practice of international cooperation, including within the United Nations, to counter that plague of the twenty-first century, which threatens rich and poor States alike. It is unacceptable to further delay taking measures against those international centres of terrorism and extremism that — under the guise of espousing universal human values — in fact develop and disseminate ideologies of fanaticism. In that connection, we welcome the Security Council's most recent counter-terrorism resolution — resolution 1624 (2005) of 14 September 2005 — on the suppression of incitement to terrorist acts. At the same time, we believe it is crucial not to allow double standards in the implementation of that instrument. Those considerations should also be concerns in the process of drafting a universal convention on international terrorism.

A powerful accomplice of international terrorism is drug trafficking. Unfortunately, no actual progress has been seen in reducing drug production in Afghanistan. On that issue, we need to move urgently from words to action. In that connection, we are counting on the international community's firm support for Uzbekistan's initiative to establish a Central Asian regional information and coordination centre to counter transboundary crimes related to drug trafficking.

The President returned to the Chair.

Together with the pressing problems of development and security there is the issue of human rights. That issue is central to forging a new path in international relations, and to United Nations reform, in particular. In his report, "In larger freedom" (*A/59/2005*), the Secretary-General notes that international treaties adopted over the past six decades form an impressive normative basis for ensuring full international acknowledgement and respect for human rights and freedoms. There is no doubt that protection of human rights needs to be one of the core tasks for the United Nations.

Uzbekistan is a party to all the major international human rights instruments and it is steadily moving towards democracy and the formation of a civil society. One important step in that direction was the decision to abolish the death penalty in the country, as proposed by Uzbekistan's President Islam Karimov.

We are convinced that reform of the United Nations human rights system needs to be carried out step by step, consistently, and taking into account the concerns of all interested parties. Along with political rights, it is necessary to strengthen other human rights,

including socio-economic and environmental rights. We reiterate our position that it is unacceptable to politicize the issue of human rights or to be selective in reviewing human rights situations, even more so when United Nations bodies or mechanisms are involved.

The establishment of a stable and long-lasting peace in Afghanistan is of strategic value for Uzbekistan. In that context, we welcome the parliamentary elections that were held in Afghanistan on 18 September. That event has become another important step towards restoring statehood to Afghanistan. Uzbekistan supports the efforts aimed at the prompt stabilization of the situation in Afghanistan. Considering Afghanistan to be a part of the Central Asian region, we encourage its active participation in regional integration processes. Uzbekistan is providing broad support to the Afghan people, as well as to relevant mechanisms of the United Nations and other international organizations, to aid the reconstruction process in that country.

Five years after the Millennium Summit, Member States have adopted an historic decision to launch reform and renovate the mechanisms of the United Nations. We have a unique opportunity to carry out more far-reaching reforms to adapt the Organization to new realities. The aim of those reforms is to ensure the well-being and prosperity of all our peoples. Today the time has come to make decisions and take action. Any protraction of the process could seriously paralyse the system of international relations, allow current threats and challenges to become irreversible, and lead to a situation in which the international community is unable to take timely and appropriate measures.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate the readiness of Uzbekistan to cooperate actively with other States in creating more effective and just United Nations.

The President: I now call on His Excellency Mr. Vsevolod Grigore, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Moldova.

Mr. Grigore (Republic of Moldova): At the outset, I should like to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as President of the sixtieth session of the General Assembly. My delegation is confident that your knowledge and vast professional experience will ensure strong and competent leadership of the Assembly.

Let me also pay well-deserved tribute to your predecessor, Mr. Jean Ping, whose tireless efforts guided Member States through the difficult negotiations that resulted in the adoption of the outcome document of the High-level Plenary Meeting.

A few days ago, speaking from this rostrum, President Vladimir Voronin of the Republic of Moldova reaffirmed my country's unwavering support for the United Nations and its commitment to work together with other Member States to renew and strengthen the United Nations system. We need an effective United Nations, a richly diverse organization that is united in its resolve and able to address the challenges and threats confronting the contemporary world.

The 2005 World Summit Outcome provides a fair assessment of the threats and challenges facing us in the areas of peace, security, development and human rights and rightly emphasizes their interconnected nature. World leaders agreed on a number of concrete actions and steps that need to be undertaken in all those areas. Those measures might not meet everyone's expectations, but they reflect a degree of consensus that is both challenging and inspiring.

Since one of the world summit's aims was to assess implementation of the Millennium Declaration, it is heartening to see the strong and unambiguous commitment of donor and developing countries to achieving the Millennium Development Goals by 2015.

The measures outlined in the areas of financing for development, debt cancellation, trade promotion, investment and other specific areas of development need to be fully implemented. Developed and developing countries must build their declared global partnership for development on the basis of mutual trust and respect, while the effectiveness and quality of aid can be ensured through a balance of appropriate financing, good governance and sound policies.

In the area of peace and security, the Republic of Moldova welcomes the unequivocal condemnation of terrorism and supports the call to conclude and agree on, during the current session of the General Assembly, a comprehensive convention on international terrorism containing a legal definition of terrorism. During the 2005 summit, the Republic of Moldova signed the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, which is further proof of our ongoing commitment to multilateral efforts aimed at

strengthening the United Nations counter-terrorism legal framework.

My country welcomes the decision to create a Peacebuilding Commission, which it considers to be one of the main achievements of the summit. As envisioned, that body has the potential to bring much-needed coherence to our strategies for post-conflict peacebuilding and recovery, provided that we succeed in making it operational by the end of this year.

Unfortunately, the outcome document pays far less attention to conflict prevention and conflict resolution, especially with regard to internal conflicts. Many regional organizations have been entrusted, under the provisions of Chapter VIII of the Charter, with dealing with a number of conflicts that are at the centre of the Security Council's attention. But, as the report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change (*A/59/565*) rightly pointed out, the efforts of regional organizations do not absolve the United Nations of its primary responsibilities for peace and security. The United Nations needs to reach out more systematically to those regional organizations, and steps should be taken to increase their accountability, particularly in the case of protracted or frozen conflicts, where a situation does not improve or even worsens over the years.

We would also like to recall the High-level Panel's proposals aimed at enhancing the capabilities and the role of the United Nations in conflict mediation, which were set aside in the discussions. One of those proposals was to give the Department of Political Affairs additional resources and to restructure it in order to provide more consistent and professional mediation support. No conflict in the world should be left without the attention of the United Nations, regardless of whether it is on the Security Council's agenda or not.

Like many Member States, we regret the failure to reach agreement on a section on non-proliferation and disarmament in the summit outcome document. But that must not preclude further common efforts to build consensus around the global nuclear non-proliferation regime and the pursuit of nuclear disarmament.

We appreciate the outcome document's support for the implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. But to make a real difference, Member States should expedite and conclude negotiations on legally binding agreements on the marking and tracing of small arms and light weapons, as well as their brokering and transfer.

The Republic of Moldova fully endorses the commitment to create a Human Rights Council. We look forward to speedy and productive negotiations on the Council's mandate, size, membership and working procedures. We have high expectations of that standing body's ability to protect and even enforce respect for fundamental human rights, especially in cases of humanitarian crimes and violations in conflict zones outside the control of sovereign States. My country also supports the decision to strengthen the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and its field offices.

As a country that has placed the concepts of democracy and rule of law at its core since gaining independence, the Republic of Moldova welcomes the reaffirmation of democracy as a universal value in the outcome document and the creation of the new Democracy Fund.

The success of United Nations reform depends on the ability of Member States to implement measures that revitalize the General Assembly and enhance the effectiveness of the Economic and Social Council and the Secretariat. Although the issue of the enlargement of the Security Council proved to be highly divisive, an enormous amount of work has been done to explore different options. We all agree that the expanded Council should be representative, efficient and transparent. We should continue to seek consensus based on those principles.

The triangle of development, peace and freedom is of direct relevance to the Republic of Moldova. Our young democracy is struggling with the difficulties of transition and suffers — as it has for more than 13 years — from a protracted, unsolved conflict inspired and supported from abroad. It sees the fundamental freedoms of a significant number of its citizens violated by an aggressive separatist regime.

As representatives of my country have stressed in the Assembly over the years, settling the internal conflict in the Transnistrian region of the Republic of Moldova is our greatest priority. Separatism is not only the main threat to our country's peace and security; it is also the main obstacle to the further consolidation of

the independence and the statehood of the Republic of Moldova and a hindrance to its economic development. The reintegration of the country, with respect for the principle of territorial integrity and sovereignty, is a prerequisite for a stable and prosperous Republic of Moldova able to achieve its internal and external strategic objectives.

The Republic of Moldova has worked faithfully and constructively towards that end for many years, looking for a peaceful, just and lasting solution to political conflict and fostering dialogue with the self-appointed Transnistrian leaders, with the help of mediating countries and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). Unfortunately, all efforts have been in vain and have only demonstrated the ineffectiveness of the old format. With support and encouragement from abroad, the separatist leaders have been using the negotiation process to claim legitimacy for themselves as the representatives of the will of the inhabitants of the Transnistrian region of the Republic of Moldova, and have promoted the idea of a pseudo-State, for which there are no ethnic, religious or other plausible grounds. In the meantime, the region has become a centre of illegal and criminal economic activity, trafficking, arms production and proliferation and a threat to the stability and security of that part of the European continent. The region's multinational population lives under constant pressure from the separatist regime's propaganda and under the surveillance of its security structures. The people of the region are constantly being intimidated and harassed.

That situation cannot go on indefinitely. There is a growing sense of urgency in Moldovan society, expressed in the unprecedented consensus and the resolve of all political parties with respect to the ways and means of settling the conflict. Political momentum is growing, as Ukraine has advanced a new plan for a settlement. Following that development, the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova passed several laws related to the Ukrainian plan, including the law on fundamental regulations of the special legal status of settlements on the left bank of the Nistru River — Transnistria — of 22 July, 2005.

The Republic of Moldova has been calling for a number of concrete actions to create the conditions for a lasting solution to the conflict, including the following elements.

First, our Government has called for the complete, unconditional and transparent withdrawal of foreign troops and munitions from the territory of Moldova, in accordance with the relevant decisions of the OSCE Istanbul Summit. The foreign military presence is used as external pressure and provides a political shield for the separatist authorities.

Secondly, it has called for the establishment of transparent and effective control over the Transnistrian segment of the Moldovan-Ukrainian border. We highly appreciate the decision of the European Union to assist in monitoring that border segment, which should help curb illegal commercial activities and all trafficking. In that context, we support the early signing of the memorandum of understanding on the European Commission Border Assistance Mission to the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, and we express our satisfaction at the readiness of the Ukrainian authorities to cooperate in that respect.

Thirdly, the Government has called for the democratization and demilitarization of the Transnistrian region of the Republic of Moldova through the development of civil society, political parties and a free press, as well as through respect for human rights and freedoms, the disarmament and dismantlement of illegal military units, militias and security structures. Only after creating a vibrant and politically open society — a process that should be carried out under the close monitoring of the international community — can one envisage the possibility of free and democratic elections in Transnistria to establish genuine, responsible representatives of the population of the region.

The Republic of Moldova has been pleading for a new negotiating format by connecting the European Union and the United States. New inputs, ideas and practical contributions are needed to move the process forward. The same is true of the current peacekeeping mechanism, which is far from meeting the recognized standards of an unbiased attitude and should be replaced by an international mechanism of military and civil observers under an OSCE mandate.

The reintegration of the country would give new impetus to our efforts for sustained economic development. The country's strong economic performance, reflected in its stable and sustained economic growth over the past four years, as well as the quality of our country's poverty reduction and

economic growth strategy paper and the Government's steady commitment to fully implementing it, demonstrate that the Republic of Moldova is on the right track to increasing the well-being of our citizens and improving the country's socio-economic indicators, including through achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

The Republic of Moldova has irreversibly chosen the path of European integration as the strategic objective of its foreign policy. We are aware of the full extent of changes, reforms and improvements we have to achieve internally to meet the rigorous European standards for economic development, good governance, democracy, political freedom and human rights. Our optimism with respect to Moldova's successful achievement of its aspirations is rooted in the firm will of the entire society to mobilize our resources to achieve that objective.

Successful and complete implementation of the EU-Moldova Action Plan will give us the opportunity to rise to a new level of contractual relations with the European Union, as set out in that document. It will also be decisive for achieving further internal reforms and general progress in the country. The recent first evaluation of the implementation of the EU-Moldova Action Plan showed encouraging results and steady progress. The Government is committed to the full implementation of that comprehensive document, which will open, we hope, a clear European perspective for our country.

My country is ready to work tirelessly to make our Organization stronger, more efficient and able to fulfil the ambitious goals set by our leaders at the 2005 world summit. Only through collective action carried out in a spirit of global partnership will we be able to create a better, more secure world for the generations to come.

The President: I now call His Excellency Mr. Crispin Gregoire, chairman of the delegation of the Commonwealth of Dominica.

Mr. Gregoire (Dominica): Mr. President, please allow me, on behalf of the Government of the Commonwealth of Dominica, to extend our congratulations to you on your assumption of the presidency at the sixtieth session of the General Assembly. My delegation is confident that, with your experience and diplomatic skills, you will preside over the Assembly with the effectiveness and the dedication required to take us through the agenda of the sixtieth session. We extend to your predecessor, Mr. Jean Ping of Gabon, our sincere appreciation for his stewardship of the fifty-ninth session and for his tireless efforts to guide the preparation of the outcome document. Our warm tribute is also due to the Secretary-General for his unqualified dedication to this institution.

Allow me at the outset to convey our deepest sympathies and condolences to the Government and the people of the United States of America in the wake of the deaths and widespread destruction caused by Hurricane Katrina. We remain concerned about the potential devastation that Hurricane Rita is likely to unleash in coming days.

One week ago, world leaders gathered here at the historic High-level Plenary Meeting and demonstrated their collective political will to overcome the many challenges facing the world. They charted a clear direction for a future of peace and prosperity for all humankind. They reaffirmed their commitment to achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), underscored the continuing relevance of the United Nations and its indispensable role in the collective management of the many problems faced by the global community, and provided clear recommendations for the reform of the Organization.

The outcome document, while falling short of our expectations, presents a platform for multilateral solutions to the broad range of global problems related to development, peace and security, human rights, the rule of law and the reinvigoration of the United Nations. The Commonwealth of Dominica is committed to the Millennium Development Goals and embraces the renewed pledge to save humanity from the scourge of war, disease, famine and poverty. We will work with all Member States to ensure a future based on hope and prosperity instead of one of despair for the poor and the marginalized of this world. We now have before us the monumental task of ensuring implementation and tangible outcomes.

Fulfilling that task, which our esteemed leaders have accorded to us, requires the determined will of all Member States. It will also require a commitment to the collective will and a retreat from preoccupation with self-interest and narrow national agendas. If nothing else, the sixtieth session should go down in history as the session at which we, the Member States, renewed our commitment to the ideal that inspired the

visionary founders: building a peaceful and prosperous world in which all peoples live together in harmony, free from want and fear.

Dominica, a small island developing State, welcomes the particular attention given in the outcome document to the special needs and vulnerabilities of small island developing States. It is a source of great encouragement to us that the Member States of the United Nations have demonstrated an appreciation of the challenges that confront all small island developing States.

The Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action is a realistic and attainable blueprint that underscores the pivotal areas for interventions to build the capacity of small island developing States to confront their various sustainable development challenges. We appreciate the support of our friends and development partners and appeal for their continuing commitment to the proper and effective implementation of the Mauritius Strategy.

Progress in the development arena will require strong political will for the implementation of the commitments we have undertaken and which we reaffirmed together in the outcome document of the High-level Plenary Meeting. These concern primarily the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals and the revitalization of the international partnership for development, with the attendant mobilization of financial resources, as well as the fulfilment of the commitment made by many developed countries to reach the target of 0.7 per cent of their gross national product for official development assistance by 2015. Dominica takes this opportunity to express its appreciation to those countries that affirmed their intention to fulfil their obligations in that regard.

My delegation feels strongly that the consensus we reached in the High-level Plenary Meeting represents a good foundation for a greater consensus towards achieving the development priorities of the developing countries. The United Nations must play a pivotal role in ensuring that the issues of trade, debt relief, investment and industrial modernization receive the highest priority if the global objective is to raise the standard of living of the people of the developing countries.

We congratulate the Group of Eight for the commitment adopted at the Gleneagles Summit, giving much-needed debt relief to 18 heavily indebted poor countries. However, a similar initiative is now required for small island developing States and middle income developing countries that are being strangled by heavy debt burdens and the simultaneous erosion of their preferential trading arrangements.

South-South cooperation has been growing over the last two decades, and through that mechanism many avenues have opened for enhanced trade relations and cooperation in the transfer of know-how and technology. Dominica welcomes the establishment of the South Fund for Development and Humanitarian Assistance and the generous initial pledges of the Governments of Qatar, India and China to this Fund. Equally deserving of commendation is Venezuela's initiative in the Caribbean, called Petrocaribe, which will help Caribbean countries to respond to the challenges posed by the high price of oil.

Aid without trade cannot be a viable proposition for small island States like Dominica. We are fully cognizant that only trade can be the engine of growth and development. Dominica and other banana-producing States in the Caribbean have had difficulties responding to the stance of multinational corporations from the United States and allied Latin American countries that have challenged the preferential access for our bananas in the European Union. We hope that reason will prevail, as we count on a fair resolution of the present banana trade impasse in Europe. Only a positive outcome will avert a future of persistent poverty for banana farmers and workers in the Caribbean.

Let me reiterate that small, vulnerable island States like Dominica need time to adjust to the transition to a fully liberalized global trading regime. Dominica has made admirable progress towards realization of the MDGs, but such gains could simply vanish like a thief in the night if we lose the preferential access to the European market for our bananas in 2006. For this reason we appeal to the international community to demonstrate the necessary political will to ensure that the Doha Development Round takes these concerns into account in the quest for a fair and equitable trading system for the benefit of all our people.

The frequency of devastating storms in Asia, the Caribbean and the southern United States and long periods of drought in Africa require a more coordinated

and organized international response. The United Nations needs to significantly enhance its capacity to respond in a timely manner to disasters in the more vulnerable developing countries. Last year many Caribbean countries were battered by hurricanes, and the Eastern Caribbean nation of Grenada was in the unfortunate situation of facing the onslaught of two major hurricanes in one calendar year. Grenada still needs additional assistance from the international community, and we appeal to all Member States to lend such assistance.

Dominica has had its share of hurricane devastation. Late last year we experienced devastation from a series of earthquakes which inflicted significant damage on our fragile infrastructure. We continue to be vigilant and have put in place a national disaster strategy to mitigate the adverse effects of such disasters on our population. My delegation once again reiterates the appeal made last year in this Hall by Prime Minister Roosevelt Skerrit for the creation of a global insurance fund to assist countries devastated by natural disasters. We call on the international community to fully implement the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015, adopted at this year's World Conference on Disaster Reduction.

Climate change is wreaking havoc on small island developing States. It is time for all Member States to accept that climate change and global warming are real and that they are caused by human activity. All Member States must implement the provisions of the Kyoto Protocol.

My delegation is concerned about the continuing instability in Haiti. We support the role of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti, but we appreciate that its limited size and resources are inadequate to respond to the complicated political situation in which Haiti finds itself. Caribbean Community and Common Market (CARICOM) States have already committed technical assistance for the elections and are cognizant that elections alone will not bring stability to Haiti. Stability will require the accelerated disbursement of pledged financial resources, more rapid implementation of social and economic project activities, and peacebuilding initiatives.

Terrorism remains a great threat to peace and security at the national, regional and international levels. Dominica condemns all acts, methods and practices of terrorism. The recent attacks in London and in Egypt underscore the danger of terrorism, which transcends national boundaries and does not distinguish between peoples, cultures or religions. Dominica is making a great effort to comply with the obligations of the various counter-terrorism conventions and pledges its support for the conclusion of the comprehensive convention on international terrorism.

My delegation regrets the failure of the outcome document to address non-proliferation and disarmament in the area of weapons of mass destruction. Relative stability in today's world should not make us complacent and lead us to compromise on the need for total disarmament. Our continuing lack of action on this issue has not served to enhance global security with respect to the threat posed by these weapons.

Small arms and light weapons pose a great challenge to the maintenance of peace and security in the Caribbean region. Narcotics trafficking has brought with it increased circulation of small arms and light weapons, which has led to a sharp increase in crime and fatal injuries. Dominica therefore welcomes the agreement on an international instrument that would enable States to identify and trace illicit small arms and light weapons in a timely and reliable manner. What is still needed, however, is a legally binding international instrument that will regulate, control and monitor the illicit trade in small arms, including their transfer to non-State actors.

Dominica is appreciative of the recognition accorded to indigenous people in the outcome document. As part of our commitment to the Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People, my delegation will work with other Member States towards the submission to the General Assembly of a draft declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples.

The future of the United Nations depends on full implementation of an institutional reform agenda that addresses revitalization of the General Assembly, reform of the Security Council and improved governance in the Secretariat. General Assembly revitalization must result in the strengthening of the Assembly's vital role as the chief deliberative, policymaking and implementation-monitoring body of the United Nations. The Secretariat needs to urgently address eroding public confidence through timely

implementation of the proposals for improvement in its management and oversight. Reform of the Security Council must be pursued to enhance the Council's accountability, transparency and efficiency. Such reform must, at a minimum, ensure that the Council's membership is more representative and remedy the continuing imbalance in the representation of Africa in the permanent membership.

We welcome the initiative to establish a Democracy Fund. Consistent with our support for the promotion of fundamental human freedoms and values, we support the establishment of a Human Rights Council. We also support the proposed Peacebuilding Commission as an advisory body.

Let me conclude by saying that we have a loaded agenda for the next decade, and that there are numerous challenges ahead. We wish to emphasize that that agenda can be realized only through multilateral action. As we look ahead to 2015, we have the honourable duty to make the United Nations truly serve the people of this global village. We have the obligation to ensure that we the peoples of the United Nations can truly live our lives in larger freedom.

The President: I now call on His Excellency Mr. Martin Belinga-Eboutou, chairman of the delegation of the Republic of Cameroon.

Mr. Belinga-Eboutou (Cameroon) (*spoke in French*): I am particularly pleased to express to you, Sir, Cameroon's heartfelt congratulations on your election to the presidency of the General Assembly at its sixtieth session. I wish you every success in carrying out your noble mandate and assure you of my delegation's full cooperation. I pay a warm tribute to your predecessor, His Excellency Mr. Jean Ping, Minister of State and Minister for Foreign Affairs, Cooperation and Francophonie of the Gabonese Republic. His great talent, consummate negotiating skill and competence contributed decisively to the success of the work of the fifty-ninth session. To the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Kofi Annan, I once again express Cameroon's full appreciation for his tireless efforts and dedication in the service of the Organization and its ideals.

At your wise suggestion, Mr. President, the main theme of our debate is the implementation and follow-up of the outcome document (resolution 60/1) of the High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly. That reflects the great importance of this debate — importance clearly shown by the strong participation in it. My country is pleased to add its voice to those of the representatives of 184 other countries, who have already spoken during this exercise.

Cameroon fully supports the outcome document adopted at the end of that historic summit. Some would have preferred that it be stronger, others that it be more proactive. Cameroon believes it is a balanced and realistic document with regard to all the major global concerns now considered to be priorities. Furthermore, it is a document that reflects a new consensus on the role of the United Nations and its place in today's international system.

Our heads of State or Government took stock of the main challenges of our time and of the priority actions that we must take together to build a genuine global partnership for development and to ensure lasting collective peace and security. They also set out guidelines to be followed over the next decade to complete the whole United Nations renewal process and the effective achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The time has come to move from words to action. Indeed, it is only by implementing those commitments that we can measure their value, force and relevance.

It is indisputable that the world has made considerable progress in implementing some of the MDGs. But there is another undeniable fact that is far less encouraging: the situation in Africa. Africa is the world's only region that, with 10 years until the deadline, is alarmingly behind in implementing the MDGs. If it does not receive substantial external assistance very soon, most of the Goals will not be attained by 2015. Most of them may remain a mirage for a long time.

We are aware that the current economic growth rate in our countries averages approximately 3 per cent . That is not sufficient to create the macroeconomic conditions necessary to achieve the MDGs. Today — particularly in sub-Saharan Africa — without large-scale job creation, revenue creation, a massive inflow of private capital or official development assistance, an effective global and sustainable solution to the nagging issue of debt, and equitable participation in world trade, our efforts will be doomed to failure.

For their part, the Governments of African countries, who have the primary responsibility for their own development, are implementing national poverty

reduction strategies in keeping with the need to achieve the MDGs. With specific regard to Cameroon, the Government is tackling that with determination. Furthermore, the implementation of its Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper is supported by the donor community.

My country has begun to review its strategy to ensure that it is fully in line with the Millennium Development Goals. It is also implementing, with the same determination, its national programme of governance. Thus, the Government of Cameroon has stepped up its efforts to combat corruption and has committed itself to a more transparent and effective management of public finances.

My country would have liked to see more ambitious and courageous commitments adopted together with a specific timetable for the development of Africa. Nevertheless, if the commitments made by world leaders in the outcome document are speedily implemented, Africa would make considerable progress in implementing most of the Millennium Development Goals and could even — depending on the adequate mobilization of national and external resources and the political will to take action — achieve all those goals by the agreed date.

During a recent crisis, the United Nations was nearly shaken to its very foundations. During those events, our sometimes differing views about our system of peace and collective security became openly apparent. Fortunately, given the need to overcome all the global threats that weigh on our collective security, the summit reached a healthy consensus on the essential nature of joint actions that we need to take for the peaceful settlement of disputes, counteracting terrorism and the maintenance and consolidation of peace.

Nonetheless, the process of revitalizing the Organization will remain incomplete until we are able to agree on the enlargement of the Security Council. May I recall that, as the President of Cameroon, His Excellence Mr. Paul Biya, declared on 14 September, Cameroon remains faithful to the African position on reform of the Security Council. This reform is necessary and must take place soon, bringing nations together rather than dividing them. This is the firm conviction of Cameroon, and my country will continue, however long it takes, to work with other States to overcome our differences and forge a solid consensus in order to achieve this very important reform.

Recourse to law for the peaceful settlement of disputes has, necessarily, as a corollary, the obligation to implement fully, willingly and in good faith the decisions of the International Court of Justice. This is how we understand the reference made in the outcome document concerning "the obligation of States to settle their disputes by peaceful means in accordance with Chapter VI of the Charter, including, when appropriate, by the use of the International Court of Justice" (*resolution 60/1, para. 73*).

Implementation of a decision of a court through positive negotiations is based first and foremost on a peaceful course of action, specifically on the basis of a deep commitment to the values and principles enshrined in the Charter. In no case may that be interpreted as an open possibility to renounce even partially the fundamental elements of that decision. Very much to the contrary.

The outcome document of the High-level Plenary Meeting allows for coordinating the activities of the principal bodies of the Organization within the framework of their mandate under the Charter for the prevention of armed conflicts and settlement of disputes. Cameroon therefore believes it desirable that we should find ways to ensure that Member States, through the Security Council and in the General Assembly, are informed formally of the status of implementation of judgements handed down by the International Court of Justice, as they are of the Court's annual activities.

The Secretary-General could thus inform the Security Council regularly and in detail and report to Member States as is done in his report to the General Assembly on the activities of the Organization.

Good practices in this area would take root and inspire us all. In that way, we would be able to identify potential sources of conflict at a very early stage through difficulties identified and to make timely recommendations to prevent them.

Cameroon, which looks forward to the rapid creation of the Peacebuilding Commission and the Human Rights Council, counts on your wisdom to ensure that the negotiating process that will lead to their creation will be open, transparent and inclusive.

During the present session, which coincides with the Organization's sixtieth anniversary, we should be inspired by the visionary dynamism provided by the heads of State and Government. This is a new opportunity, perhaps one of the best opportunities, along with the Millennium Summit, to make a decisive contribution to improving the human condition and achieving an ideal world where all women, men and children live free from fear, hunger and disease.

It is our responsibility here and now to fulfil the generous promises made by our leaders to humanity a week ago. Let us do so without making excuses, without seeking loopholes. Let us do it now.

The President: We have heard the last speaker in the general debate. Several representatives have requested to exercise the right of reply. May I remind members that statements in the exercise of the right of reply are limited to 10 minutes for the first intervention and to five minutes for a second intervention and should be made by delegations from their seats. I call on the representative of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya.

Mr. Irhiam (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (*spoke in Arabic*): Let me congratulate you, Mr. President, on your vast experience and competence in presiding over our discussions, and I wish you every success. I would also like to point to the excellent relations between the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and friendly Sweden.

The Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bulgaria mentioned the situation of the Libyan children who were deliberately and grievously afflicted by the Bulgarian nurses and the Palestinian physician with the AIDS virus. He also referred to the protection of human rights.

It is true that describing the deaths of a few children and the injuries of many as a tragedy does not fully reflect the suffering of their families and loved ones. It is more than a tragedy — it is a major disaster in every possible meaning of the word. It is a disaster unprecedented in the annals of human history. Thus, if we are to truly protect human rights, the rights of Libyan children must first and foremost be protected, along with those of their families and relatives, but not those of the Bulgarian nurses and the Palestinian physician. The disaster has affected not only Benghazi city, but all of the decent, generous people of Libya, who were deeply shocked by that horrible tragedy.

The President of Bulgaria and other foreign officials who were visiting Libya at the time saw the extent of the tragedy. They were informed of the legal procedures established to deal with the accused. The trials were fair and transparent, and included the participation of Bulgarian representatives and several representatives of diplomatic missions in Libya. The trial lasted several months and resulted in a just conviction. The results of the appeal to the Supreme Court are pending.

I would recall that international conferences organized under United Nations auspices have consistently reaffirmed the supremacy of law and that there can be no good governance without respect for the law and the judiciary.

Mr. Ileka (Democratic Republic of the Congo) (*spoke in French*): Two days ago, the General Assembly heard Mr. Sam Kutesa, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Uganda, describe at length his country's view of the situation in the Great Lakes region and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. My delegation deeply regrets the fact that Mr. Kutesa's comments were disrespectful, discourteous and totally unacceptable.

The representative of a country that has produced and continues to produce the most Ubu-like dictators that our region has ever seen has nothing to teach anyone. By calling into question the sacrosanct principle of the inviolability of borders since decolonization, Mr. Kutesa merely revealed what we all knew already: his country's irredentist designs on the Democratic Republic of the Congo with the purely mercantilist aim of making a grab for the eastern provinces of my country. The objective of the Ugandan authorities, which has been denounced here at the United Nations, is to dismember Africa for the purposes of attaining economic domination and control of significant sources of raw materials in Congolese territory, which have considerable reserves of raw materials and strategic minerals.

The Ugandan sponsors of the pillaging of the Democratic Republic of the Congo's natural resources and other wealth are well known. Their names figure prominently in every report of the relevant United Nations expert groups.

Mr. Kutesa's statement also demonstrated his country's lack of sincerity and involvement in the peaceful settlement of the crisis in the Great Lakes

region. Uganda seems to be seeking a new pretext to justify its negative and harmful interference in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Coming at a time when, thanks to the concerted efforts of the countries of Central Africa, most of the countries of the Great Lakes region, the African Union, the United Nations and interested bilateral partners, a happy end to what might be called the first African world war is at hand, Mr. Kutesa's remarks were most unfortunate.

The wise Mr. Kutesa has revolutionized international law with his introduction of the concept of so-called provisional immunity. Nevertheless, in our view, all Ugandan nationals who have Congolese blood on their hands and whose armed groups pursue a policy of terrorism against our civilian populations will ultimately have to answer for their actions before either the International Criminal Court or ad hoc tribunals.

Moreover, Uganda's Congolese puppets — the very people Mr. Kutesa wishes to see integrated into the armed forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo — are, like Colonel Kakolele Bwambale, comfortably ensconced in Kampala. These are rebel officers who had been nominated in the context of the integration of the armed forces command; they include leaders of armed groups in Ituri and mere warlords. They have all gone to Uganda to seek the support of the official authorities and to organize themselves in preparation to attack the Democratic Republic of the Congo and roil the transition process there.

All those Congolese puppets and their Ugandan masters are also responsible for terrible large-scale massacres of men, women and children; they practice summary and extrajudicial executions and systematic rape; engage in major violations of human rights and international humanitarian law; and deliberately and criminally spread HIV/AIDS. Fortunately, with the help of the international community, those Congolese puppets and Ugandan bandits will not be with us much longer.

Mr. Kutesa dared to refer to the difficulty of disarming the so-called negative forces. I would recall here that, at the height of Uganda's aggression, when it occupied more than half of our territory, it was incapable of arresting even one Ugandan rebel. Moreover, the supposedly powerful Uganda army was ignominiously defeated on three occasions, most notably in the martyr city of Kisangani.

Clearly, everyone in the Great Lakes region has suffered that futile and senseless war for too long. Our entire population hopes for peace in which we can renew the relationships of friendship, trust and peaceful coexistence of the past. I assure the Assembly that the Democratic Republic of the Congo is firmly committed to the peace process because it is in our interests and in the interests of the entire Great Lakes region.

In conclusion, my country believes that, in order to persuade Uganda sincerely to embark on the road to peace, the international community, represented by all Member States present here, must impose a comprehensive embargo on the sale of arms and suspend bilateral and multilateral assistance to that country in order to cut the link between that assistance and the conflict, which is being fought to perpetuate the illegal exploitation of our country's natural resources and other wealth. We must take care, however, not to penalize the Ugandan people.

The international community should also adopt protective measures, including the freezing of assets and a travel ban for high-ranking officials of the Ugandan oligarchy. The international community should call on Uganda to respect the various commitments it has made in all freedom, be they in the framework of existing United Nations mechanisms or the quartet under United States leadership.

Mr. Mammadov (Azerbaijan): I am taking the floor to respond to the Armenian representative's misstatement in reply to the statement made by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan on 18 September.

Contrary to the Armenian representative's presentation — or, rather, misrepresentation — the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan did not refer to the territories surrounding the Nagorny Karabakh region of Azerbaijan, but to the occupied territories of Azerbaijan. Azerbaijan has never resorted to military aggression. Armenia, having failed to achieve its political goal of obtaining the secession of Nagorny Karabakh from Azerbaijan, started the expulsion of Azerbaijanis from Armenia and resorted, subsequently, to military aggression in order to acquire, forcibly, the territory of the Nagorny Karabakh region of Azerbaijan and to institute ethnic cleansing in the occupied Azerbaijani territories. The culmination of those acts of

savagery was the Khojaly massacre — the brutal slaughter of about 700 innocent civilians.

Like the Security Council, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe — in a resolution adopted this January, the text of which is annexed to document A/59/689 — specifically established the fact of the Armenian occupation of the territories of Azerbaijan. That resolution unequivocally reconfirmed that Nagorny Karabakh is an integral part of Azerbaijan, decisively called for respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and its internationally recognized borders, underlined the inadmissibility of the use of force for the acquisition of territory and resolutely demanded an immediate, complete and unconditional withdrawal of all occupying forces from all occupied areas of Azerbaijan and the establishment of conditions for the safe return of displaced persons to their places of permanent residence.

The fact-finding mission of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) that was dispatched to the occupied territories of Azerbaijan — the report of which the Armenian representative also misinterpreted — was made feasible by the General Assembly's just and fair approach in response to the grave concern expressed by Azerbaijan. The fact-finding mission confirmed the fact of the Armenian settlement of the occupied territories of Azerbaijan, the regional population of which had been completely expelled. In their conclusions and recommendations, as contained in annex I to document A/59/747, the Co-Chairmen of the OSCE Minsk Group requested that any further settlement of the occupied territories of Azerbaijan should be discouraged and urged that changes be avoided in the demographic structure of the region, which would make difficult any further efforts to achieve a negotiated settlement of the conflict in and around the Nagorny Karabakh region of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

Out of goodwill, Azerbaijan suggested the use of the so-called Lachin corridor as a road of peace by both sides in both directions. The rejection of the road of peace is further proof of the destructive Armenian position. However, Azerbaijan still hopes that the Armenian side will not miss this chance to advance the negotiation process, with the assistance of the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairmen, in accordance with the key understanding reached within the Prague process.

The President: The general debate of the General Assembly has now concluded. On behalf of the Assembly, I should like to thank all of the speakers for their contributions.

The theme of the debate was the follow-up to and implementation of the 2005 World Summit Outcome. Over the past seven days we have heard many thoughtful and constructive interventions on that subject. As at the world summit, speaker after speaker stressed the need to make faster and more substantial progress towards the Millennium Development Goals. Time after time, as Members may recall, speakers emphasized the fact that the battle against poverty is one that we must all fight — and win — together. The strong message is that the political momentum for development — life and dignity for all — which has grown this year, must be maintained and strengthened.

In recognition of that, we should explore ways in which we can speed up progress on development in a way that complements the work of other parts of the United Nations and other international economic and social bodies.

There were other widely shared concerns expressed in this debate. Many emphasized the necessity to make progress in establishing the Peacebuilding Commission and the Human Rights Council and in moving management reform forward. Terrorism and the responsibility to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity were also highlighted. Many expressed disappointment that a text on disarmament and non-proliferation was not included in the Summit Outcome document.

However, we should note and welcome the widespread recognition that development, security and respect for human rights are interconnected and that the peoples of the world — our peoples — need and want a reformed and rejuvenated United Nations.

Understandably, there has not been consensus on how every item on our agenda should be taken forward. But there has also been a widely held view that the General Assembly now needs to move quickly on follow-up and implementation, so that the political energy generated through the outcome document negotiations, the summit and the general debate is not lost.

Over the next few days, I will reflect carefully on the points made during the debate. I will also make myself available next week to meet Member States, either individually or in groups, to hear more of their views on priorities and ways of working. I would encourage any Member State which has further thoughts on follow-up and implementation to contact me or my Office as early as possible next week.

Taking into account the views expressed, I intend to write to all Member States before the end of next week outlining the proposed way forward. Shortly thereafter, I plan to convene an open meeting to involve all Member States in the final consolidation of the proposed programme of work.

Once that process of consultation is completed, work on follow-up will have to begin without delay. As I said when I opened the debate on 17 September, the world will be watching us closely. The extent to which we — all of us in the Assembly — can muster a spirit of urgency and common purpose in the coming days and weeks will ultimately determine whether the world summit will go down in history as a missed opportunity for the United Nations or, as I hope, the start of the most substantial reform programme in the history of the Organization.

We will need to work efficiently, with civility, discipline and a readiness to compromise for the greater good. I want to assure members that I intend to conduct this work with transparency, fairness and respect for the General Assembly's central and crucial role in these negotiations. It is here, and only here, that negotiations will take place and decisions will be made. I look forward to working with all members in that spirit as we shoulder our historic responsibility together.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 8? I see no objection.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 7.05 p.m.

United Nations A/60/PV.24

General Assembly
Sixtieth session

Official Records

24th plenary meeting
Thursday, 29 September 2005, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Eliasson ..... (Sweden)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 110 (*continued*)

Report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization (A/60/1)

The President: Members will recall that the Secretary-General presented his report to the General Assembly at the 9th plenary meeting, held on 17 September 2005.

Mr. Neil (Jamaica): I wish to begin by thanking the Secretary-General for his report on the work of the Organization over the past year (*A/60/1*). It gives us a wide survey of the many activities in which the United Nations is engaged and illustrates its extended reach and coverage in promoting international cooperation. The report reveals significant variations across the various fields in relation to both performance and results. There have been successes as well as setbacks in a year of mixed fortunes for the Organization.

On behalf of the Group of 77 and China, I will address the report's coverage of United Nations activities in international economic cooperation, which we consider to be a major priority for the Organization. Poverty, hunger, disease and their attendant maladies are conditions that call for concerted action — not just from instincts of human solidarity, but because they are central to achieving the overall goals of the United Nations.

The past year was one in which major reviews were undertaken of progress in a number of different fields. In February, the Commission for Social Development carried out its 10-year review of the social development agenda set out in Copenhagen and at the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly. The review of the Beijing Platform followed shortly afterward, at the March meeting of the Commission on the Status of Women. Both outcomes showed a mixed picture and registered a clear message on the need to complete the unfinished agenda on poverty reduction, social integration, full employment, gender equality and the empowerment of women.

During the thirteenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development, in April, we recognized the critical importance of concrete actions on issues of water, sanitation and human settlements. Important and practical policy options were identified and now await support and sponsorship.

The focus on assessing progress towards the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) after five years occupied much of the attention of the General Assembly for most of the year. Reports and studies were presented which highlighted the importance of urgent action, especially in those regions that have made limited progress. The Millennium Project report (*A/59/727*), published in January, contained many impressive proposals that, regrettably, did not survive the negotiations for inclusion in the outcome document of the High-level Plenary Meeting (*resolution 60/1*). We also recognized that, beyond the MDGs, there is

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wider scope for development cooperation. The Secretary-General's report correctly points out that, while the MDGs provide a compelling platform for mobilizing the international community, there is a broader development agenda that needs to be advanced, particularly in trade, finance and monetary affairs and the transfer of technology. These issues were not dealt with as forcefully as we would have liked in the 2005 World Summit Outcome. They will have to be given priority in the overall implementation of the commitments undertaken with respect to development in the future direction of international economic cooperation.

Efforts within the United Nations system to promote economic growth and development are based on a shared commitment anchored on the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities among developed and developing countries. The most urgent task is to promote implementation of commitments through strengthening the global partnership, through the adoption of policies that enhance opportunities for growth for developing countries, through the removal of inequities in the international system that are constraints to development, and through greater democratic participation for all States in international economic decision-making. In the Organization's progress on these matters over the past year, the record has not been impressive. It is of utmost importance that the United Nations system gear itself to accomplish these objectives.

We have to think of ways to strengthen the role of the United Nations in promoting the implementation of development commitments by development partners and development institutions. We believe that the Economic and Social Council, which was assigned several responsibilities to promote policy dialogue and development cooperation in the recently adopted 2005 World Summit Outcome, has a critical role to play in guiding a bold and focused implementation process to fulfil these commitments.

Major efforts need to be applied in the area of the implementation of commitments on the transfer of resources. Important steps have been taken by the European Union on official development assistance (ODA) timetables, and by the Group of Eight on debt, which should have a significant impact on resource flows. The international community should build on these positive steps and maintain momentum on resource mobilization.

In the operational activities of the United Nations for development, we support the Secretary-General's emphasis on increasing the level of inter-agency coordination in the delivery of technical cooperation, but we are concerned about the inadequacy of oversight arrangements and about the tendency towards concentration on governance and human rights. What is needed is a broader approach to capacity-building, one which encourages assistance and support to projects that directly address poverty alleviation, such as those driving increased employment generation and the development of infrastructure.

At the global level, greater efforts need to be made to improve the United Nations role in the interface with the Bretton Woods institutions in order to have greater influence on the formulation of global economic policies. The current arrangement for the spring high-level meeting with the Economic and Social Council needs to be expanded in its scope, duration and substantive result. It is essential that we move beyond the current format in order to give this mechanism the possibility for greater impact.

The Secretary-General's report also draws attention to the wave of humanitarian emergencies experienced during the past year. The increased frequency of hurricanes in the Caribbean and the Gulf of Mexico, the swarm of locusts in Africa and the tsunami in the Indian Ocean were among the most devastating. The great outpouring of international support for relief to countries affected by the tsunami was unprecedented in its scale and served to alleviate the human and economic costs to affected developing countries. Unfortunately, other crises less spectacular and lesser in scale suffered from neglect and lack of media attention.

We wish to commend and acknowledge the work of the United Nations, which in all these circumstances has been sustained and effective. The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and its leadership deserve our praise for their advocacy in generating international support and for their own contribution in the conduct of relief operations. We endorse the Secretary-General's appeal for an increase in funding, which continues to be below the level required to deal effectively with the consequences of natural disasters. We welcome the moves to expand the Central Emergency Revolving Fund and the commitment of donors. The increased attention to natural disaster management called for at the national

and international levels is clearly justified. Much of the devastation has affected developing countries already besieged by economic problems, making it more difficult for them to cope with severe hardships and to advance development efforts. We need to work expeditiously and with a sense of urgency towards the early establishment of a worldwide early warning system for all natural hazards.

In the course of the past year, much attention was focused on administrative and management issues resulting from allegations of improprieties, which gave rise to investigations conducted in some operations. Allegations of misconduct and corrupt practices gave rise to great concern and adverse publicity in sections of the news media. We are satisfied that the Secretary-General took prompt action to ensure a thorough and fair investigation, especially in relation to the management of the oil-for-food programme. The revelation of irregularities in the conduct of the programme obviously would justify the need for improved arrangements for accountability and oversight. It is vital that independent auditing and oversight arrangements ensure that ethical standards are maintained, that there is full accountability, that there is transparency in United Nations operations and that efficiency and the avoidance of waste are ensured.

It seems clear that what is needed now is not a rush into hasty action and the installation of new mechanisms to satisfy pressures generated through sections of the news media. There should be a comprehensive review of governance arrangements and proposals submitted to the General Assembly for consideration, on the basis of which carefully thought-out remedies can be applied to meet the exacting standards of efficiency and ethical conduct we require in the operations of the United Nations. We should, at the same time, recognize reforms that have already been achieved. The Secretary-General has pointed out in his report that most of the reform elements previously proposed have been implemented, resulting in clear benefits, including a revised budgetary process with a shorter, efficient cycle of planning and budgeting, a reduction in the quantity of reports and better utilization of conference services.

We note also that the Secretary-General has embarked on internal management reforms, and we particularly welcome his initiatives for more transparency in the system for the appointment of senior officials and heads of agencies. We hope that this policy will be extended to all appointments at the appropriate levels of senior management.

In relation to the process under the Capital Master Plan, the situation has become difficult due to complications in the availability of temporary accommodation, and the alternatives do not appear to be very favourable. In addition, as the Secretary-General points out, some of the underlying expectations for advancing the project as approved in 2004 have not been fulfilled. This is especially so with regard to the financing arrangements and the terms and conditions of the loan offer from the host country, which need serious reflection by Member States.

On the overall question of resources, we share the Secretary-General's concern over the fragility of the financial situation of the United Nations. The problem of unpaid assessments continues to deplete resources, which, in turn, requires resorting to cross-borrowing to finance existing programmes. The Group of 77 and China reaffirms that the solution lies in the hands of Member States, which should honour their legal obligations to pay their assessed contributions to the United Nations in full, on time and without conditions.

Increased security arrangements for the Secretariat were carried out during the past year, including the establishment of a Department of Safety and Security which came into effect in January. This was in response to the increasing concern over security affecting the United Nations staff at Headquarters and in different parts of the world. We support arrangements for ensuring that the staff of the United Nations receives adequate protection, especially where conditions are most volatile. However, we expect appropriate security arrangements to be determined on the basis of some principles of differentiation and stringent security arrangements not to unduly limit the engagement of the United Nations staff in dealing with problems on the ground. It is important that, at the people level, the United Nations presence be more than a symbol and that visible engagement take place, especially in relation to the implementation of social and economic programmes.

In reporting on partnerships, the Secretary-General has emphasized the importance of forging links and broadening the involvement of civil society, business groupings and other entities in the work of the United Nations. This should be encouraged, but with a recognition of the need to respect the

intergovernmental nature of the Organization and the need to ensure that all initiatives in relation to participation and joint efforts with non-governmental organizations fall within accepted guidelines and do not compromise or undermine the rights and interests of Member States.

In conclusion, the Secretary-General's report on the past year shows a mixed record and underlines the need to strengthen the United Nations and the system of international cooperation. It is obvious that the Organization will have to adapt to changing conditions and that reform should be made where reform is needed. It is important in that process that we recognize the importance of inclusiveness and transparency in any decision-making and ensure that the results reflect the wide interests of what is a diverse community of nations. This is best accomplished by due consideration of all proposals for reform, in a process within the established procedures and mechanisms of the General Assembly.

In achieving our goals we will continue to rely on a Secretariat which is politically neutral and objective in the implementation of mandates and which is committed to the principles of international service, working under the direction of the intergovernmental bodies of the Organization. This should always remain paramount.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): We thank the Secretary-General for his comprehensive report on the work of the Organization (*A/60/1*). It gives a broad overview of the activities of the United Nations, as well as of the major challenges that confront the world today.

The performance and effectiveness of the United Nations depend on several crucial factors: first, the quality of its human resources; secondly, the financial resources provided to support its activities; thirdly, the authority vested in the Organization by Member States; and fourthly — and most important — the political will of Member States to support the mandated programmes and activities of the United Nations. Viewed in that context, and considering the recognized constraints, the performance of the United Nations and its family of organizations must be judged to be largely satisfactory.

We welcome the progress registered towards achieving peace in Afghanistan, the Sudan, Iraq and, lately, in the Korean peninsula. We see better prospects for peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine and the Jammu and Kashmir dispute. We remain concerned, however, over the persistence of other crises and conflicts in Asia and Africa, where innocent lives are being lost daily. We condemn the recent terrorist attacks in the United Kingdom, Egypt, Iraq and other regions of the world.

Pakistan commends the Secretary-General for his consistent efforts to provide and promote solutions to those issues. We particularly appreciate his initiative to launch the process of United Nations reform. The 2005 world summit affirmed that the United Nations must be enabled to play a central role in addressing the multifaceted and interconnected challenges and threats confronting the world today.

Pakistan supported the adoption of the outcome document (*resolution 60/1*). It reflects the existing consensus on a range of issues. However, like many others, we are disappointed with the results. We could have achieved more perhaps if the agenda had not been so extensive, if the debate on Security Council reform had not sapped energy from the preparatory process, and if negotiations on the document had been commenced earlier, as we had suggested. However, the real challenge now is to ensure effective implementation and follow-up of those decisions. My Foreign Minister has already outlined Pakistan's general approach on various issues where action will be required at this session (*see A/60/PV.18*).

Today, I would like to offer some remarks on the implementation process. Pakistan regards the outcome document as the beginning, not the end, of the United Nations reform process. Implementation of decisions and commitments made should be balanced, with priority being accorded to development. Implementation involves not only building new institutions or reforming existing ones, but also reviewing and ensuring the implementation of the policies and commitments that Member States have undertaken in the outcome document. The implementation process should be located within the General Assembly, not in groups or forums outside the United Nations. It should be Member-driven, with support, as required, from the Secretariat. And the process should be open, transparent and inclusive.

The implementation process will have to traverse four stages. First, decisions to be followed up must be identified. Secondly, proposals must be submitted and circulated. Thirdly, outcomes need to be negotiated by consensus. In that regard, voting should be avoided.

since it would open a Pandora's box of divisive votes on various issues. Finally, the status of implementation has to be reviewed, perhaps at the end of December and early next year, and again just before the end of the sixtieth session.

We will support efforts to take action on the Human Rights Council, the Peacebuilding Commission, a counter-terrorism strategy and convention and management reform. But, there must be priority action on development. Development remains the highest priority for the vast majority of Member States. We fully endorse the statement just made by the Permanent Representative of Jamaica on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

The outcome document embodies welcome recommendations on official development assistance targets, debt relief, enhancing and improving aid and addressing the special needs of Africa. Developing countries — and others — are, however, not fully satisfied with the outcome in several areas, such as trade, investment flows and global governance. Lack of progress on the implementation of development commitments would, therefore, further accentuate existing misgivings.

A bold and focused implementation process to fulfil commitments undertaken on development issues is thus absolutely critical. The United Nations, and the General Assembly, cannot abdicate the responsibility to secure fulfilment of the development goals and commitments that have been undertaken. It is therefore imperative to put in place an effective mechanism to promote and monitor the implementation of the agreed goals and commitments on development by States, by development partners and by the concerned institutions, including the Bretton Woods institutions. Pakistan will shortly circulate a paper on the implementation of development decisions.

The 2005 summit assigned several responsibilities to the Economic and Social Council in promoting policy dialogue, development cooperation, post-conflict development, and coordination within the United Nations system. The Council should also play an important role in promoting and monitoring the implementation of the Development Goals.

Security Council reform should not be allowed to once again divert attention from other areas. The September deadline precipitated a confrontation. We hope that the December deadline will not be pressed and will not provoke a similar confrontation. Efforts should be made, through quiet consultations, to explore a possible consensus. For that, time will be necessary.

We are confident, Mr. President, that under your able leadership Member States will succeed in implementing the agenda that the September summit has set for us. We assure you of our fullest cooperation in that endeavour.

Mr. Hannesson (Iceland): Mr. President, we congratulate you on your election and wish you well in the important work ahead. Your speech on 23 September, at the end of the general debate (*see A/60/PV.23*), bears witness to your dedication to the Organization and what it stands for. We thank the Secretary-General for the comprehensive report on the work of the Organization (*A/60/1*). It is now up to us, the Member States, to make concrete efforts to implement and follow up the decisions made at the summit so that its outcome will become a real success.

Looking back over the past year in which the level of United Nations peacekeeping operations reached a historic high, we welcome the emphasis our leaders placed on investing in prevention, peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding. We welcome in particular the creation of a peacebuilding commission and a support office within the Secretariat. We must ensure that both are up and running by the end of the year.

We fully concur with the Secretary-General in his report on the extent to which terrorism is a threat to everything the United Nations stands for. We support the thrust of the five-point strategy previously outlined by the Secretary-General. If the struggle against terrorism is to be successful, it is essential for us to agree on definitions and means for prevention and to conclude a comprehensive convention against terrorism before the end of this session of the General Assembly.

Unfortunately, no progress on non-proliferation was reached in May this year at the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and we failed at the major summit to address that issue. Proliferation is a profound danger, which the United Nations must confront in a decisive manner. If we continue on the present path of stalemate, the threat of terrorism, combined with weapons of mass destruction, will only grow.

We thank the Secretary-General for his valuable contribution to development by placing it at the centre of the ongoing reform. The two major reports on development — that by Professor Sachs and the Secretary's-General report "In larger freedom" — illustrate the clear link between development and security, which underlines further the need to address those issues in tandem.

The Government of Iceland has acknowledged the great challenge posed by the Millennium Development Goals and will increase efforts to assist the developing countries in reaching these Goals. Each country must, however, take primary responsibility for its own economic and social development, and a key element of successful long-term development is good governance and the rule of law. A developing country that creates a transparent and accountable environment that respects good governance and the rule of law will attract domestic and foreign investment, which will foster the growth of a vibrant private sector.

International trade liberalization is a key pillar for the private sector and a successful conclusion of the Doha development agenda is important for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. A fair, open and equitable multilateral trade system would allow developing countries to take full part in the globalized economy and thus contribute significantly to increasing the resources available in the developing countries to combat poverty.

We welcome the fact that the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights has placed greater emphasis on strengthening national systems for human rights protection. We also welcome other new developments in the same direction. There is, however, an urgent need to reform the human rights machinery of the United Nations.

Please allow me to quote the Icelandic Minister for Foreign Affairs, speaking at the general debate of this Assembly:

> "The Commission on Human Rights is dysfunctional and devoid of credibility; deliberations on human rights have suffered accordingly. Moreover, the credibility of the entire United Nations Organization is threatened... For Iceland, the ideal human rights council would be smaller than the Commission and would be in session all year so that it can respond to emergencies. The composition of the new council will be fundamental to its effectiveness. It must not include major human rights abusers." (*see A/60/PV.16*)

We have a mandate from the major summit to establish a human rights council and it is up to us to get it up and running as soon as possible and not later than before this session of the General Assembly ends.

It is essential that the Secretariat be equipped to deal with the challenges that we, the Member States, have thrust upon it. I would like at this point to praise the Secretariat, under the inspirational leadership of the Secretary-General and a number of other top officials, for its committed and professional work in many areas. But, as in any large organization, adjustments are needed, new skills need to be brought in, and a more rapid renewal of staff may be required than can be achieved by natural turnover. That may entail some expense in the short term, but with dividends in the long run.

It is for the Member States to ensure that we are not imposing too many tasks on the Secretariat and spreading resources too thinly. Iceland therefore stands fully behind the Secretary-General in his efforts to modernize the management and to strengthen the Organization. We must live up to the promises we made at the major summit by providing the United Nations with adequate resources to enable it to implement its mandates and achieve its objectives.

Let me conclude by congratulating the Secretary-General and his staff on the work they have undertaken in this historic and hectic year of action, often under difficult circumstances.

Sir Emyr Jones Parry (United Kingdom): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and those countries that have aligned themselves with this statement.

The European Union thanks the Secretary-General for his comprehensive report on the work of the Organization during one of its busiest years — a year culminating in the achievements and decisions of the world summit. The summit outcome is a clear mandate for change, addressing the challenges that the world has long faced.

I would now like to respond to the Secretary-General by describing how the European Union hopes the summit will equip the United Nations better to

meet the challenges outlined in the main sections of his report.

First, I would refer to peace and security. Not only are development, security and human rights each imperative in their own right; they are mutually reinforcing. We have seen time and time again how conflict and instability in developing countries have destroyed fragile social, environmental and economic progress. The threats of terrorism and proliferation endanger the stable global environment within which trade flourishes and economies grow.

The summit agreement to establish a peacebuilding commission will make a major contribution to a better coordinated international response to the needs of countries emerging from conflict. It will help prevent conflicts from restarting and encourage countries to make the transition from violent instability to peaceful, sustained development. The European Union is committed to seeing the Commission established by the end of this year.

Increasingly, conflict and violence take place beyond the boundaries of conventional war. No continent is safe from the threat of terror. International terrorism requires an international response. We pay the price for each others' vulnerabilities.

The United Nations has already done much to set international standards against terrorism and to encourage and help States to meet them. The European Union welcomes the summit outcome's clear condemnation of terrorism and the undertaking to conclude a comprehensive convention on international terrorism during this sixtieth session. The European Union firmly believes that the targeting and deliberate killing of civilians and non-combatants cannot be justified or legitimized by any cause or grievance.

The European Union regrets the summit's failure to reach agreement on measures for non-proliferation and disarmament. In his speech to the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Secretary-General gave stark warning of the catastrophic global impact of any such use. We should heed his words.

Secondly, with respect to development, the Summit provided the foundation for strengthening the global partnership between developed and developing countries, as set out at Monterrey. The European Union has set a timetable to reach new levels of official development assistance. By 2010, this will account for 0.56 per cent of the Union's collective gross national income — an annual additional 20 billion euros. By 2015, it will reach 0.7 per cent. EU member States recently agreed to support the G-8 agreement to write off debt. In addition, the summit recognized the value of developing innovative sources of financing. Such scaled-up financing is vital in our joint endeavour to reach the Millennium Development Goals by 2015.

Sub-Saharan Africa is not on target to reach many of the MDGs until something like 100 years from now. In some areas — including hunger and sanitation — the situation is actually deteriorating. At least 50 per cent, therefore, of the increase in the European Union's aid resources will go to Africa; in plain terms, that represents a doubling of EU assistance to Africa over the next five years. Of course, all of us need to live up to and meet the commitments that we have taken on.

More aid on its own will not be enough. The real engines for making poverty history will be the developing countries themselves. Making sure that aid is used better and more effectively is as important as increasing it. We need to drive up standards of governance and help the poorest people, for whom support is most crucial. This means developing countries adopting ambitious national development strategies, creating and reinforcing good governance structures, fostering a positive environment for economic growth, and helping the private sector flourish. We welcome the strong and comprehensive commitments made in that regard by the African countries through the African Union and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) initiative.

As for trade, the EU believes that, through the Doha round, the international community must deliver real gains. With a comprehensive, pro-development agenda combining trade liberalization with rule-making and complementary aid for both trade and trade-related assistance, the Doha round can bring benefits to all trading partners and in particular, and crucially, to developing countries. We therefore need to make all the efforts necessary to produce a successful conclusion to the Doha round, and in particular to ensure that the opportunity of the Hong Kong Ministerial Meeting is not missed.

We need to ensure that development, in rich and poor countries alike, is sustainable. The Union

therefore welcomes the summit's recognition of the need to meet the commitments and obligations undertaken in the Framework Convention on Climate Change, which we consider to be the appropriate forum for negotiating future action on climate change. The Union is firmly committed to urgent global action to mitigate climate change — a serious, long-term challenge for every part of the world. The EU welcomes the summit's decision to explore the possibility of a more coherent framework and more efficient environmental activities in the United Nations system, including through a more integrated structure.

Thirdly, improving international architecture for humanitarian response and operational activities is long overdue. The response to the appalling tsunami in the Indian Ocean in December demonstrated the willingness of Governments, civil society and the private sector to respond rapidly and generously to an unprecedented crisis. But the Sudan, northern Uganda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo continue to illustrate the fact that we must do better. At an operational level, the Union is determined to see improvements in the predictability of humanitarian funding and capacity and standby arrangements, inter alia through the modernization of the Central Emergency Revolving Fund.

The current reforms to operational activities, which will bring the various United Nations agencies and programmes working in one country together under a single leader and common management, are good. We look forward to the Secretary-General's further work on strengthening the management and coordination of operational activities to make an even more effective contribution to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

Fourthly, with respect to the international legal order and human rights, over 50 years the United Nations has had remarkable success. It has built a framework of international human rights law and set clear standards by which all States are to be judged. But in setting standards, we have neglected for too long their implementation. When standards have been breached, we have not always done enough. The Union therefore welcomes the unprecedented recognition of the international community's responsibility to protect populations from the threat of genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing or crimes against humanity.

The summit took two other important steps towards creating more effective human rights machinery within the United Nations: the decision to establish a Human Rights Council and the commitment to reinforce the role of, and double the resources available to, the Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights. Protection and promotion of human rights has been reinforced as the third pillar of the work of the United Nations, alongside development and peace and security. The EU will work to complete as soon as possible, during this sixtieth session, negotiations on the mandate, modalities, functions, size, composition, membership, and working methods of the new Council.

The Union reiterates its strong support for the International Criminal Court. We welcome the fact that the Security Council decided to refer the situation in Darfur since 1 July 2002 to the Court. That will help contribute to our common objective of ending impunity and establishing the rule of law in post-conflict or crisis situations.

Turning now to Secretariat and management reform, the European Union welcomes the decisions on management reform taken at the summit and intends to pursue their implementation vigorously during this session. There needs to be a modernized approach to management in the United Nations based on strengthened accountability, greater transparency and more efficient working practices. It is vital that the resources of the United Nations be channelled to the areas of greatest need, where they will have the greatest impact. The European Union therefore welcomes the summit decision on the review of mandates. The Secretary-General, for his part, needs the authority and flexibility to carry out his managerial responsibilities and to be able to redeploy resources from lower- to higher-priority areas.

The EU underscores its support for stronger United Nations-wide coherence, starting with the implementation of the measures identified at the summit to promote coherence of policy, operational activities, humanitarian assistance and environmental activities.

The EU is committed to ensuring the availability of adequate resources for the United Nations while adhering to our longstanding principles of budgetary discipline. We will therefore seek to adopt an appropriate budget for 2006-07 that will enable the

United Nations to deliver meaningful results in all its activities, including new mandates agreed by the summit. Given the need for urgent renovation and the need to make the Headquarters in New York safe, we need agreement on a comprehensive capital master plan during this session.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the Secretary-General and all the staff for the work they have done this year, often in difficult and dangerous circumstances. We hope that the actions and decisions we take here in the General Assembly to follow up on our collective decisions at the summit will strengthen the Organization and enable it to achieve its objectives more fully. If that happens, this year will indeed mark a milestone in the history of the United Nations.

Mrs. Holguín (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): I wish to express our best wishes to you, Sir, in your endeavours as President of the sixtieth session of the General Assembly. We thank the Secretary-General for the presentation of his report. Once again, the report illustrates the Organization's enormous responsibility in responding to thousands of people who see in it the possibility of improving their level of development, well-being and respect for their rights, along with the Organization's important contribution to peace and security.

We support the statement made by the Ambassador of Jamaica on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. Allow me, instead of discussing reform, to focus on the subject of the Colombia as mentioned in the report. Colombia wishes to highlight the work of the United Nations in our country and the assistance the United Nations has provided. We are a country that believes in the assistance of the United Nations, and we demonstrate our faith through our openness, generosity and transparency with the Organization. We are grateful to the Secretary-General for his efforts to promote peace in Colombia.

Colombia is a country with a complex reality, not always easy to understand, where every Colombian family has suffered in one way or another from the repercussions of violence. As a country, we are convinced that only we can find solutions to our problems. The Colombian people have risen against adversity. We are people that do not give up or fall victim to intimidation.

Progress made in reducing violence in Colombia has been significant and the world acknowledges that. The Colombian Government has devoted great efforts to ensuring that the Colombian people can live without fear of kidnapping, massacre or attacks by violent groups. We have improved, but we still have a long road to travel in order that Colombians may one day live in peace and without fear.

In paragraphs 27, 149 and 156 of the Secretary-General's report, there are inaccuracies in references to the situation in Colombia. The report states that the situation has not improved. That is far from the truth. Concerning displacement, once again we face the problem of differences between United Nations figures and the official figures, which reflect the real numbers. While the report speaks of two million displaced, the official figures show one and a half million.

Colombia has a comprehensive programme of assistance for displaced persons and is conscious of the work it needs to do in order to meet the needs of its people. Colombia has been making progress, as is evidenced by the improvements of recent years. In 2004, displacement decreased by 29 per cent in comparison with 2003. This is insufficient, and the Government knows that, but the result is positive. Voluntary return is taking place in strict accordance with the principles of security and dignity and is one of the Government's priorities, in which it has invested more than $400 million during the past year in assistance to displaced persons. We should remember that Colombia is one of the few countries in the world that has incorporated the guidelines on displacement into its national legislation.

The report states that violence has increased, especially against the indigenous population. The figures and facts show the opposite. Between 2003 and 2004, attacks against indigenous populations were reduced by 59 per cent. Between 2004 and now, they have decreased by an additional 55 per cent. Granted, this is insufficient, but it is positive.

The Government of Colombia has concentrated its efforts on protecting the lives and physical integrity of people threatened by the criminal acts of illegal armed groups, groups that are financed by the drug trade.

We would like to request the Secretariat to review the data and assertions contained in the three paragraphs that mention Colombia and to recognize the positive improvements that Colombia has made during recent years. It is important to recognize the efforts of

States and their capacity to meet the needs of their people.

We find it important to highlight the 2004 report of the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB), which recognizes the significant achievements made in Colombia and South America in the fight against the global problem of illicit drugs. For the third consecutive year, the total area used for growing cocaine crops has been reduced. Regional and bilateral cooperation efforts have been strengthened. There has been an increase in drug seizures and in the capture of criminals involved in drug trafficking. It is a shame that the Secretary-General's report does not mention these accomplishments. In my country, drug trafficking is the main source of the financing of violence.

Likewise, the INCB report stresses once again how illicit drug traffic has links to organized crime. For this reason, it is very important for the United Nations and the entire world to recognize what is stated in paragraph 69 of the Secretary-General's report, "... the increasing links between terrorism and drug trafficking ..." We believe that by fighting transnational organized crime, which includes the global problem of illicit drugs, we are also fighting the financial sources of terrorism.

We wonder how many countries could redirect the funds they channel towards combating terrorism, crime and narcotics and use it for development and the improvement of its people. In this regard, we would like to recognize the work of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, which cooperates with Member States through direct technical assistance to put into practice international standards on combating money laundering and the financing of terrorism. This Office is visionary in promoting programmes of alternative crops in support of programmes for the complete eradication of illicit drugs. Likewise, we would like to recognize the efforts of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate.

To conclude, I would like to state that the challenges of today's world, instead of leading us to characterize and judge, should bring us together to cooperate and unite our best efforts and resources in order to overcome those challenges and achieve the well-being that we dream for our peoples.

Mr. Denisov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Secretary-General correctly notes in his report on the work of the Organization that the United Nations, despite its imperfections, embodies the hope of the mankind for a peaceful and just world order. The United Nations, the most representative intergovernmental body with a universal mandate, continues to play an indispensable coordinating role in global affairs.

Last year, a record number of peacekeepers were sent to the regions where there are still many conflicts. The United Nations focused considerable effort on promoting sustainable development, including the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and the search for responses to global threats and challenges, such as natural disasters, pandemics of new diseases, eradication of poverty, and so forth.

We have participated in heated discussions on the role of the Organization in today's world. The 2005 World Summit outcome document, despite difficult consultations on the draft, confirmed that the members of the international community share views on today's key issues. It was exceptionally important that world leaders reaffirmed their commitment to ensuring international security on the basis of a comprehensive collective approach, including military, political, economic, humanitarian and human rights aspects, and in strict compliance with the Charter of the United Nations.

Speaking at the High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly (*see A/60/PV.5*), Russian President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin stressed the need to address United Nations issues with utmost care while persistently and patiently continuing the process of the reform of the Organization. The outcome document (*resolution 60/1*) is a broadly acceptable basis for further concerted action to enhance the effectiveness of the United Nations as the central multilateral institution.

The summit failed to reach final decisions on all questions. In many areas work will go on. One of the near-term priorities in this work is the creation of the Peacebuilding Commission, which should help the Security Council and, if necessary, other United Nations bodies too, in their efforts to ensure the swift recovery of countries emerging from crisis and to create guarantees that these conflicts will not be resumed.

There is much to be done in the area of promoting sustainable development and the eradication of poverty, epidemics, hunger and illiteracy. The summit

endorsed a large-scale programme for achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs); Russia supports initiatives that seek to attain the Goals and will continue to make a contribution towards resolving these pressing questions.

We agree with the Secretary-General regarding the importance of endeavours to achieve the MDGs in the context of a broader development agenda based on the integration of economic, social and environmental goals, in accordance with the decisions taken by landmark United Nations conferences and summits. We support the steps taken by the Economic and Social Council in this area. We share the report's objective of enhancing the effectiveness of United Nations participation in implementation of the Monterrey Consensus, inter alia through continuing the practice of annual meetings between the Economic and Social Council, the Bretton Woods institutions, the World Trade Organization and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, and through the High-level Dialogue on Financing for Development.

We agree with the Secretary-General's conclusion regarding the need to increase the Organization's counter-terrorism efforts. We believe that the United Nations, and the Security Council, should become a headquarters for combating international terrorism. Russia is prepared to continue to promote the strengthening of the central role of the United Nations in this area. An important new step was taken with the adoption, at the 14 September Security Council summit, of Council resolution 1624 (2005). Now, not just terrorists, their accomplices and financial backers, but also those who instigate terrorist acts, have been proclaimed outlaws. This Security Council decision should put an end to attempts to use the mass media to spread terrorist ideas and to justify terrorism. We echo the appeal of the Secretary-General to make every effort to agree as soon as possible on a draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism. We think that, if the political will is there, this challenge can be met at this session of the General Assembly.

The outcome document stresses that priority attention should also be given to formulating a comprehensive counter-terrorism strategy, which should become one of the main building blocks of the collective security system. The five elements proposed by the Secretary-General for this strategy require thorough discussion and some clarification. A difficult stage lies ahead when Member States come to finalizing the concept. Moreover, we cannot postpone the creation of a consolidated sanctions list of terrorists and terrorist organizations, regardless of whether or not they are associated with Al-Qaida or the Taliban.

Work needs to be continued on improving the arsenal of United Nations human rights instruments. For Russia, respect for human rights is of great importance, and that is why we supported the idea of establishing the Human Rights Council. At the same time, as rightly noted in the report of the Secretary-General, the reaction to this proposal to establish a new human rights body reflected a broad range of views. That was apparent also during the talks leading up to the summit. Accordingly, it is vital to act on the initiative of a number of countries, including Russia, to set up an open-ended working group to formulate the main parameters of this future Council during the sixtieth session of the General Assembly, on the basis of the principles of transparency, non-selectivity and due regard for the views of all Member States.

We support the efforts to ensure the protection of civilians in armed conflicts. However, we believe that the wording of the relevant sections of the Secretary-General's report should have been given more responsible consideration, with due regard to the fact that conflict situations should be described on the sole basis of the provisions of the Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols. In this context, we would like to stress again the need to use the correct geographical names.

United Nations multilateral mechanisms should play a leading role also in resolving questions of disarmament and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, on the basis of strict compliance with the international conventions in this area. The lack of any substantive section on this issue in the outcome document is a vivid reflection of the differences of view that still exist. However, it is to the credit of the United Nations that Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) and the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism were adopted. Their implementation would help prevent weapons of mass destruction from falling into the hands of terrorists.

Today, it is becoming particularly urgent to prevent an arms race in outer space. The time has come to develop transparency and build confidence in

matters related to outer space. During the current session of the General Assembly Russia will be putting forward some initiatives on the subject.

We attach exceptional importance to improving the management of the Organization. The summit outcome aims to ensure the effective functioning of the Secretariat. We need to have in our hands real tools for assessing the work of the Secretariat in accordance with the priorities set by the Member States. We look forward to concrete proposals from the Secretary-General on how to create a well-organized and efficient system that ensures accountability on the part of the Secretariat, as well as other recommendations called for in the outcome document. The proposals of the Secretary-General must be considered in accordance with established procedures in the General Assembly.

The Russian Federation will participate actively and constructively in collective efforts to act on decisions approved by world leaders and goals identified by them, including on further reform of the Organization. This work has to go on in an open and transparent manner, without artificially imposed deadlines for decision-making. It is crucial to ensure the broadest possible agreement, and, ideally, to have consensus on key issues of reforming and strengthening the United Nations, which will to a large extent determine our common ability to manage processes that are occurring throughout the world in this era of globalization, as well as our capacity to counter effectively the attendant threats and challenges. We are convinced that there is no alternative to this approach.

Mr. De Rivero (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): For obvious reasons having to do with its drafting and publication deadlines, the Secretary-General's report (*A/60/1*) does not make any judgements on the outcome of the greatest summit of world nations ever convened at United Nations Headquarters. My delegation therefore believes that the Assembly is right, as it discusses the report of the Secretary-General, to refer analytically to the summit outcome, since the rushed deadlines and high-pressure atmosphere involved in obtaining a final document did not make it possible to calmly assess the results of the High-level Meeting.

In general, what is stressed by the news media — which shape world public opinion — is that the summit's results fell short of expectations. They are not wrong. Indeed, the outcome document does fall short of the reform proposals set out by the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change and by the Secretary-General. What is important now is to ask ourselves: why did that happen?

The truth is that the reform proposals were extremely interesting, but also extremely ambitious, given the political realities of a world that is globalizing but, at the same time, fragmenting. Today the world is being globally integrated by trade, financial flows and the digital telecommunications revolution but, at the same time, is culturally fragmenting as a result of differing perceptions of what international security is, of how to achieve development and, above all, of the relationship between human rights and the State.

This cultural fragmentation is also reflected within the United Nations. The Members of the Organization have differing perceptions of those issues. The only common denominator uniting them is, in the last analysis, the literal interpretation of the Charter.

In fact, there is no one concept of international security that is shared by United Nations Member States. For some, international security involves a mainly strategic and military approach; for others, international security has essential socio-economic components; and for still others, security includes the new concept of human security.

Nor do Member States share the same concept of development. Some States confuse development with the minimal expectations of the Millennium Development Goals and believe that halving extreme poverty is a Development Goal that can be achieved through international assistance. Other States believe that development is achieved more through trade than through assistance. Still other States — those very few that have experience because they have made progress towards development — believe that development involves a genuine scientific-technological revolution that will liberate countries from basic, low-technology production and exportation.

Nor do Member States of the Organization share the same cultural concept of human rights, democracy or the State. Although United Nations resolutions state that human rights are indivisible, the truth is that, for some States, human rights are essentially civil and political rights, whereas for others, basic human rights are economic, social and cultural rights. For many

countries, the State is the supreme value; for others, the State is merely a servant of the citizen. Finally, there are countries that believe that religion and the State must be totally separate, while others do not accept such separation.

Given those differing cultural perceptions, the reform proposals were extremely ambitious. To approve them, the majority of Member States would have had to share the same cultural perceptions of international security, development, the State and human rights. That is the main reason why the outcome fell short of expectations. The interesting and ambitious reform proposals did not take into account the cultural fragmentation that exists today despite globalization.

Notwithstanding that poor outcome, some reforms survived without much substance, such as the responsibility to protect, the Human Rights Council, the Peacebuilding Commission and the Democracy Fund. We must work on those issues in the future and, above all, reactivate the Millennium Development Goals.

Undoubtedly, where the outcome document fell short of all the expectations of the media and of the entire international community was in the area of the Millennium Development Goals. Demonstrating that is the fact that the *Human Development Report 2005*, issued almost at the end of the outcome document negotiations, stated that the main Millennium Development Goals were not being implemented and called for a programme of action to achieve them. Despite that, the outcome document did not take the *Human Development Report*'s warning into account. Thus, it does not establish any effective action plan for reactivating the Millennium Development Goals. That is one of the most disillusioning and disturbing results of the outcome document.

That is disturbing because the main Millennium Development Goal — halving extreme poverty by 2015 — is only a minimalist Goal, a kind of damage control. Reducing extreme poverty is not the same thing as making progress towards development. Development is much more than reducing extreme poverty; it involves a technological revolution, the creation of a middle class and the rule of law.

The experience of this truncated reform, which has had negative repercussions on the image of the United Nations, should serve to convince us that the United Nations is not easy to reform, especially through ambitious proposals and revolutionary change, however rational they may be. Where we do need to be ambitious is in reforming the Secretariat's functioning. Such reform can be accomplished swiftly. In contrast, when it comes to political reform, we should not be so ambitious. From now on, we must think of the Charter as, politically, the lowest common denominator uniting us in a world that is globalizing but culturally fragmenting — a world where there are no common strategic, political, economic or cultural perceptions.

The key word for political reform of the United Nations is "prudence", because our failure to reform will only create a bad image that will give ammunition to the Organization's enemies. United Nations reform must be carried out realistically — that is to say, incrementally. Evolution, more than revolution, is what we need in the future.

At the end of the day, the United Nations continues to be the essential multilateral world Organization. However much cultural fragmentation may exist, the United Nations is the only institution in which we can face the major challenges of the twenty-first century, from infectious diseases to the collapse of States, from terrorism to climate change. It is the only legitimate instrument of global governance that we have. Therefore, we must persist in striving more diligently to identify what unites us, because the trend towards cultural fragmentation in a globalized world is the great challenge facing our institution.

Mr. Kumalo (South Africa): Let me begin, Sir, by expressing my delegation's appreciation of your work as President of the sixtieth session of the General Assembly. We are indeed privileged to have a person with your leadership skills guiding our work.

We also wish to thank the Secretary-General for his report on the work of the Organization (*A/60/1*). The report shows that, 60 years after it was created, the United Nations continues to undertake important work in many fields touching the lives of ordinary people in many different parts of the world. For that reason, we associate ourselves with the statement made by Jamaica on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Our present debate is timely, following the 2005 world summit, where heads of State or Government reviewed progress made since the adoption of the Millennium Declaration. The summit recognized the interlinked threats and challenges that face the world

today, the need for concrete action on development, security and human rights and the critical need for institutional reform. The summit reaffirmed the importance of the United Nations as a central part of the system of global governance required to address the challenges facing the world today. It also showed, however, that there is an urgent need for the Organization to be reformed and revitalized to reflect today's global realities if it is to be empowered to address the threats and challenges we now face.

We believe that the challenge for the sixtieth session is, therefore, to focus on the implementation of the 2005 World Summit Outcome (*resolution 60/1*). We need to maintain the momentum of the summit and ensure that we meet the mandates agreed upon by our heads of State or Government. It is important that the political momentum for development generated by the summit be maintained. The summit outcome and the report of the Secretary-General show that many countries still face major obstacles in their efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. Furthermore, the review has shown that many of the countries that are not on track to meet the Millennium Development Goals are in Africa. We are therefore pleased that the summit proposed specific actions that need to be undertaken to address the special needs of Africa.

The major United Nations conferences and summits of the past decade that focused on the economic and social fields played an important role in galvanizing support for development. We would have preferred it if the international community had used the opportunity provided by the recently concluded world summit to commit to the full implementation of all the outcomes of the past conferences and summits, in particular the World Summit on Sustainable Development, the Monterrey Conference on Financing for Development and the World Conference against Racism. We hope that the fact that the outcome document was not definitive on this matter does not provide a loophole for those who choose to have selective amnesia about our long-standing commitments.

During the past year, we also had an opportunity to review the implementation of the Copenhagen and Beijing conferences. We welcome the reaffirmation by our Governments of their will and commitment to continue implementing the Copenhagen Declaration and the Programme of Action, in particular to eradicate poverty, promote full and productive employment and foster social integration to achieve stable, safe and just societies for all. The implementation of the Copenhagen commitments and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals should be viewed as mutually reinforcing. It was in that same context that an annual draft resolution on the implementation of the social objectives of the New Partnership for Africa's Development was introduced by the Group of 77 and China in the agenda of the Commission for Social Development.

Gender equality and women's empowerment are essential components of the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Without women's equal access to and full participation in power structures and decision-making, the goals of gender balance and equality, development and peace cannot be achieved. It is therefore unfortunate that the summit outcome document did not contain a stronger reaffirmation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly.

One of the important decisions of the summit was that the Peacebuilding Commission should be established and be made operational by the end of December 2005. The report of the Secretary-General demonstrates the importance of the work of the United Nations in conflict prevention and peacemaking. We believe that the Peacebuilding Commission will be crucial in supporting those efforts, so that the international community will have a long-term perspective on post-conflict reconstruction and development. We call on Member States to reach an agreement as soon as possible to make the Peacebuilding Commission operational.

The summit also reaffirmed the importance of human rights, democracy and the rule of law. South Africa will work constructively with other delegations to ensure that the Human Rights Council is established during the current session of the General Assembly. As my delegation has always stated, all human rights — including the right to development — are important both to the poor and to the rich, the developing and the developed countries. For the Human Rights Council to be effective it will have to be different from the Commission on Human Rights and avoid politicization through selectivity and double standards. We believe that it is indeed possible to form a body that can earn the confidence of all Member States.

With regard to disarmament and non-proliferation issues, we have witnessed a succession of setbacks beginning with the failures of the United Nations Disarmament Commission and the Review Conference of States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). Recently, the summit outcome document also failed to propose a way forward on these issues. Nonetheless, those obstacles should in no way weaken our resolve to work towards the full implementation of all obligations, commitments and undertakings made at previous NPT Review Conferences.

South Africa continues to be concerned about the threat posed by weapons of mass destruction, not only to individual States, but also to the international community as whole. Regrettably, current endeavours to address those concerns continue to be characterized by actions that paralyse the multilateral instruments established to address them. South Africa believes that the only effective way of addressing those concerns is through the established instruments in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation. Universal adherence to, full implementation of and compliance with those international agreements and the complete elimination of all weapons of mass destruction constitute the only guarantee against the threat or use of those weapons.

While the Conference on Disarmament continues to demonstrate its inability to begin negotiations, and the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty continues to be delayed owing to non-ratification by States required to do so, South Africa still views those disarmament measures as a way to accomplish the goal of nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation.

South Africa welcomes the conclusion of the work of the Open-ended Working Group to negotiate an international Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace in a Timely and Reliable Manner Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons. My delegation attaches great importance to the United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms and calls for the early implementation of that instrument.

With regard to the issue of anti-personnel landmines, South Africa attaches great importance to strong regional, subregional and national commitments. The Common African Position on Anti-Personnel Landmines is a powerful message of the priority that the African region attaches to the implementation of those issues.

The report of the Secretary-General demonstrates that the capacity of the United Nations is enhanced by its cooperation with regional organizations. Regional organizations, such as the African Union, have shown their commitment to resolving long-standing conflicts. We also recognize that the activities of regional organizations are sometimes limited by the lack of resources and logistical capabilities. It was for that reason that South Africa supported the proposal that the General Assembly consider financing some of those operations from the regular budget on an exceptional basis, and we regret that this could not be agreed. We would also like to emphasize that the increased role of regional organizations should not absolve the United Nations of its Charter responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.

The Secretariat in recent months has faced numerous calls for greater efficiency, improved accountability and better management. The Secretary-General has instituted several measures aimed at reforming the Organization, enhancing the safety of its staff, and making it more responsive to the entire membership. We recognize those efforts and reiterate our commitment to ensuring that reform will culminate in a strengthened United Nations. At the same time, however, we believe that it is imperative that Member States also acknowledge that we have a responsibility to ensure that the Organization receives adequate resources to implement the increasing number of mandates assigned to it and to enable it to meet the challenges effectively and efficiently.

We further believe that, during the sixtieth session, we should recommit ourselves to our Charter obligation to bear the financial expenses of the United Nations and to paying our assessments in full, on time and without condition. We note from the Secretary-General's report that the Organization in 2005 faced cash shortages in several active peacekeeping operations, the International Tribunals and the regular budget, due to non-payment of assessed contributions, which were threatening the viability of those operations. That dire financial situation is regrettably also making it unfeasible for the United Nations to meet its obligation to reimburse troop-contributing countries and to return credits to Member States. Only through our collective action will we be able to break that vicious cycle.

In closing, Sir, we look forward to your leadership and guidance on how we are to follow up on the implementation of the outcome document. We wish to assure you that our delegation is ready to give you all the support that you may need.

Mrs. Laohaphan (Thailand): As I am taking the floor for the first time, allow me to extend my warmest congratulations to you, Sir, on having been elected to your important post. My delegation has full confidence in your leadership and stands ready to work closely with you and other members of the Bureau.

I also wish to take this opportunity to express my appreciation to Mr. Jean Ping, the President of the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session. Having served as one of his facilitators during the consultation process for the outcome of the summit, I have come to genuinely appreciate President Ping's leadership, courage and integrity.

Let me begin by thanking the Secretary-General for his comprehensive report on the work of the Organization, as contained in document A/60/1. I also thank him for his tireless efforts in strengthening the work of the United Nations, both at Headquarters and in the field. I also wish at the outset to pay tribute to the men and women who are serving the noble cause of the Organization in all corners of the world.

This past year, we have many reasons to be thankful: the end of the North-South conflict in Sudan, democratic elections in Afghanistan and Iraq, and the recent commitments on official development assistance and debt cancellation by the European Union and the G-8, to name but a few.

Yet, at the same time, many situations remain to be resolved: the increasing threat of terrorism; the prevalence of such infectious diseases as HIV/AIDS, malaria and bird flu; and the unprecedented occurrences of natural disasters affecting people both in the North and the South. Now more than ever, the United Nations is called upon to act.

Throughout the last session of the General Assembly, we spent most of our time discussing how to bring changes to the Organization to enable it to respond more effectively to the challenges of our time. Less than two weeks ago, our leaders adopted the outcome document of the summit, the result of our year of hard work and long days and nights of discussions. We should spare no effort in translating those words into actions. While Member States are committed to doing our part, I was also heartened to hear from the Secretary-General at the opening of the general debate that he intended to follow through on every action asked of him, and he asked Member States to pledge to an accountability pact to live up to what the summit outcome requires of us. My delegation supports the Secretary-General in upholding that accountability pact and we will work actively at the national, bilateral, regional and international levels to ensure the effective implementation of the summit outcome, and in particular to make our best efforts to enable all countries to achieve the Millennium Development Goals by 2015.

Looking at the report of the Organization prepared by the Secretary-General, we should ask ourselves in all fairness whether we are asking too much of the United Nations. The United Nations is asked to maintain peace and security, to promote human rights, to meet humanitarian commitments, and to develop and uphold the international legal order. None of those tasks will be easily accomplished.

In that regard, I wish to reiterate the point I made last year in this Hall that we must provide the United Nations with timely and adequate tools and resources to perform its work efficiently. With approximately 70,000 peacekeepers deployed worldwide, the United Nations needs tremendous resources to build and maintain peace. With hunger, famine and starvation prevalent in all corners of the world, notably in Africa, the United Nations task is simply enormous. With natural disasters that have proved to be as threatening as man-made ones — including here in the United States, where we have witnessed the plight and suffering of the victims of Hurricane Katrina — the United Nations role and involvement are increasingly called for.

Certainly, the United Nations cannot accomplish all those tasks without sufficient resources. Member States need to pay their contribution in full and without delay. Voluntary contributions should also be increased and, where possible, not earmarked.

While the work of the United Nations is obviously enormous and far-reaching, my delegation wishes to highlight specifically our concern over the incidence and severity of natural disasters and the extent to which they come to affect our lives. The Secretary-General's report cites dramatic figures

concerning the victims of natural disasters. During the period from April 2004 to April 2005, 246,000 people were killed by natural disasters and 157 million were injured, displaced or adversely affected. An estimated $100 billion-worth of property damage also occurred. That is an upward and quite discomforting trend.

Mr. Diarra (Mali), Vice-President, took the Chair.

Having been hit by the Indian Ocean tsunami last December, Thailand fully understands the plight of the victims of these natural disasters and believes that more must be done to enhance preventive measures and to strengthen our efforts in disaster management, as well as in recovery, rehabilitation and development in the post-disaster phase. The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) needs to be strengthened. United Nations agencies and programmes involved need to be coordinated so that they can respond more efficiently to natural disasters and avoid duplicating work and overlapping in the use of resources.

In this regard, we are pleased to see that the summit outcome (*resolution 60/1*) urged support for the efforts of countries, and developing countries in particular, to strengthen their capacities at all levels in order to prepare for and respond rapidly to natural disasters and to mitigate their impact. We hope that this expression of support will be translated into concrete actions and measures at the national, regional and international levels. Likewise, we support improving the Central Emergency Revolving Fund and the use of emergency standby capacities, under the auspices of the United Nations, for a timely response to humanitarian emergencies.

The year ahead of us will be an exciting one. Our leaders have asked us to try to reach agreement during this session of the General Assembly to conclude a comprehensive convention on international terrorism. While the matter has long been on the table, we are now working with a sense of urgency and commitment towards ridding the world of terrorist acts. My delegation anticipates that we can all put our differences behind us and work actively in a spirit of cooperation towards this common goal.

My delegation also looks forward to further discussion during this session of the General Assembly on how to strengthen the work of the United Nations. Over the coming year, under the guidance of the President, my delegation hopes that we will be able to realize our many aspirations for institutional reform. The Peacebuilding Commission, when set up, will help to ensure effective peacebuilding and sustainable peace, and, over the long run, it will save tremendous costs in peacekeeping operations. The Human Rights Council, we hope, will address the problem of politicization that has long been embedded within the Commission on Human Rights.

Last but not least, Secretariat and management reform will be instrumental in guiding all the work to be undertaken. We hope that Member States will work closely together with the Secretary-General and the management to see how we can give flexibility to the Secretary-General yet, at the same time, ensure that the views and concerns of Member States are fully taken into consideration. My delegation pledges to render the President our full cooperation and support.

Mr. Jenie (Indonesia): Once again we have assembled to review and discuss the work done by the United Nations over the last year to attain the objectives of the Charter. In this regard, I want to express my appreciation for the efforts of the Secretary-General to provide us with a comprehensive report on the work of the Organization (*A/60/1*).

Before continuing, allow me first to associate my delegation with the statement made by the Permanent Representative of Jamaica, who spoke on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

The Secretary-General's report comes after the historic High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly. One may be inclined to think that there is nothing important left to be said. But the report of the Secretary-General indicates otherwise. Therefore, the report deserves our full and careful consideration. Bearing that in mind, there are values that must not be compromised in any way. Our efforts to maintain international peace and security, to achieve international cooperation in solving global problems and to promote respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, without any distinctions, must remain high on the global agenda.

The report makes it clear that there are many social, economic and political issues that should engage our attention as we move forward. Moreover, it is a timely reminder that there is a larger development agenda in need of our attention by making reference to the many important conferences and summits in the

economic and social fields, the outcomes of which are yet to be fully implemented.

Against this background, the outcomes of major United Nations conferences and summits must be faithfully carried out. Financing for development must flow to developing countries, whose exports must gain access to markets based on a universal, rule-based, open, non-discriminatory and equitable international trading system. The best solution for the problem of debt affecting developing countries must be found. International cooperation through partnership on sustainable development must be enhanced.

As the report notes, the frequency with which natural disasters are occurring and their increasingly devastating impact on nations is one area of concern that needs our serious attention. In this context, Indonesia wishes once again to express its gratitude for the unprecedented and unswerving support from the international community and United Nations specialized agencies in the aftermath of the tsunami last December. Indonesia looks forward to the Special Envoy for Tsunami Recovery, former President Bill Clinton, playing his essential role; he will maintain sustained global attention and cooperation in the process of rehabilitation and reconstruction of the affected areas. I would also like to express my delegation's deepest sympathy on the plight and suffering of the victims of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

Moreover, Indonesia fully supports the implementation of agreements on global climate change, based on the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. Without a doubt, stronger efforts must be made to encourage all countries to ratify the Kyoto Protocol.

We share the concern that the disempowerment of women and discrimination against people living with HIV have led to social exclusion and have contributed to a worsening of the AIDS epidemic. It is therefore our common responsibility to address these unfortunate facts. We are deeply concerned that the target of providing three million people living with HIV/AIDS in developing and middle-income countries with life-prolonging antiretroviral treatment by the end of 2005 will, unfortunately, not be achieved. Extra efforts are urgently needed to further accelerate the achievement of the next target.

In dealing with development, the report makes no mention of South-South cooperation. Because of its positive impact on the global development process, South-South cooperation as a complement to North-South cooperation deserves our continued support.

On the subject of achieving peace and security, the report, predictably, identifies both progress and setbacks for the United Nations and the world in the year under review. In this regard, Indonesia's foreign policy is always to promote peace. Wherever possible, we foster dialogue and reconciliation.

In this same spirit of reconciliation, Indonesia and Timor-Leste, an important neighbouring State, have reached out to each other so that both nations may together bring about closure to a difficult episode in our shared history. Indonesia and Timor-Leste together have established a Truth and Friendship Commission, designed to expose the truth concerning the human rights violations committed prior to and immediately after the popular consultations in Timor-Leste in 1999.

The Commission started working last August. We are convinced that this is the way to go because it not only seeks the truth, but also supports reconciliation in full conformity with the principles on which the bilateral relationship is being developed, namely, forward-looking and reconciliatory.

A matter of particular interest to Indonesia is the report's reference to the Indonesian province of Aceh. In it, the Secretary-General expresses the hope that the peace talks between the Government of Indonesia and the Free Aceh Movement will succeed. We are pleased to point out that the Government of Indonesia signed a final peace agreement with the Movement last month, which is now being implemented.

Monitoring mechanisms that involve the European Union and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations have been put in place. The decommissioning of the armed wing of the Free Aceh Movement has made significant progress, as has the withdrawal of non-organic Indonesian armed forces from the province, in accordance with the peace pact. Peace and development in Aceh are in fact the fruits of the reform and democratization that are pervading all of Indonesia.

The report observes that, during the year, new challenges and threats heightened international concern about weapons of mass destruction, an uncanny presaging of the High-level Plenary Meeting outcome

document, which speaks volumes about that subject by not saying a word.

Months before, the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in May 2005 failed to reach agreement on any substantive issues, an unfortunate landmark which attracted the attention of the Secretary-General, who notes that a golden opportunity was lost to address the most pressing problems of both non-proliferation and disarmament more broadly. On that point, we are also reminded that the Conference on Disarmament and the Disarmament Commission lamentably remain deadlocked, a point that Member States must address speedily.

Let me make one more point on peace and security, because it strongly represents a point in which we deeply believe. On the subject of terrorism, the Secretary-General cautions that no cause or belief justifies terror and indiscriminate violence against civilians. Calling for international cooperation to defeat terrorism, he stresses that this menace "is not the product of any particular religion or ideology, nor is it directed only at certain countries or people" (*A/60/1*, para. 3). That underlines the imperative of addressing the root causes of terrorism. We would recommend the use of interfaith dialogue and cooperation as one means of empowering moderates and as a useful tool to combat terrorism and promote understanding, tolerance and peace in general.

With regard to the strengthening of the Organization, Indonesia looks forward to further discussions on all issues pertaining to management and Secretariat reform, in accordance with the relevant General Assembly resolution and within the appropriate committee. We fully recognize the need for greater transparency, accountability and efficiency, but hope that those changes will not affect the priorities of developing countries in different fields.

Concerning the staff buy-out, Indonesia is of the view that more detailed information should be provided to justify such action and to indicate what the likely costs will be, and we hope that it will not create imbalances in geographical representation.

Mr. Hamidon (Malaysia): Let me begin by expressing my delegation's appreciation to the Secretary-General for his comprehensive and incisive report on the work of the Organization, as contained in document A/60/1. My delegation wishes to associate itself with the statement made by the representative of Jamaica on behalf of the G-77 and China.

Over the last two weeks, this Assembly has been engaged in the High-level Plenary Meeting and the general debate, and the world summit has adopted the outcome document. This is a momentous time that Member States should seize, and they should not lose momentum in bringing about the necessary reform of the United Nations. In that regard, I wish to underline Malaysia's position that the reform of the United Nations system to enhance its effectiveness must also lead to the promotion and strengthening of multilateralism.

As described by the Secretary-General in his report, this past year has witnessed both progress and setbacks for the Organization and the world in many areas, in particular in the fields of international peace and security, as well as in international economic cooperation and development. While we support adequate attention being given to issues related to international peace and security, we are particularly concerned that not much progress has been registered in the field of international economic cooperation and development.

Malaysia feels strongly that special attention must be paid to efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. We are concerned about the fact that, at the current rate of progress, the Goals are expected to be realized only in 2147, rather than the initial target year of 2015. In our efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, we should continue to be mindful of the current as well as the emerging challenges facing us. Clearly, the biggest challenges facing the developing countries are poverty eradication and financing for development. There are over one billion people — one in every six people around the world — who live in extreme poverty, subsisting on less than $1 a day.

The situation regarding financing for development is equally worrisome, if not critical. More than 30 years ago, the richest countries committed themselves to providing 0.7 per cent of their gross national income as official development assistance, particularly for the poorest countries. However, the amount given has amounted to a mere 0.25 per cent of the combined gross national income of countries that are members of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic

Cooperation and Development. In that regard, Malaysia welcomes the adoption by the European Union of clear timelines for reaching the 0.7 per cent target.

Apart from that, the international financial architecture should also be reformed. Eight years ago, East Asia was battered by a financial crisis, which in turn had transregional repercussions threatening the health of the global economy. A current issue that could also threaten to imperil the global economy, and which this Organization should address, is the prolonged and sustained increase in oil prices. That burden is disproportionately borne by developing countries and impoverishing them further. It is reprehensible that the poor are expected to absorb the cost of instabilities of production.

The Secretary-General's report elaborates on conflict situations in many parts of the world. In that regard, United Nations peacekeeping operations have continually proven to be an indispensable tool for the maintenance of peace and security, in the context of both inter-State and intra-State conflicts. The increase in the number of peacebuilding and peacekeeping missions in the past year has also placed greater strain on the Organization's resources and its capacity to plan, deploy and manage those missions. My delegation would like to urge Member States to positively respond to the call for sustained political support and for an increase in their financial commitment to ensuring the success of those missions.

Peacebuilding is another important component in the maintenance of international peace and security. We have seen all too clearly in the past that countries under stress or recovering from conflict have slid back into anarchy and failure. It is in that vein that Malaysia supports the establishment of the peacebuilding commission, which could play a pivotal role in assisting countries emerging from conflict in their economic development and institution of the rule of law. The peacebuilding commission to be formed should be under the aegis of this Assembly and deal with post-conflict situations.

Nor should the United Nations not lose sight of one long-standing problem which has been confronting the Organization since its inception: the question of Palestine. Malaysia welcomes the Israeli withdrawal from Gaza. But this should be part of the road map process and should be quickly followed by similar measures in the West Bank. Israel should also cease all settlement activities, including in and around Jerusalem, as well as the construction of the separation wall, which has been pronounced illegal by the International Court of Justice. The United Nations must remain engaged in efforts for the establishment of an independent and sovereign Palestinian State with Jerusalem as its capital.

Malaysia condemns terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, committed by whomever, wherever and for whatever purpose, as it constitutes one of the most serious threats to international peace and security. We have faced and fought terrorism in the past. We were successful in defeating the terrorist threat, not by the use of conventional military force alone, but also by winning the hearts and minds of the people. That is why Malaysia has been calling for an understanding of the root causes of terrorism so that we can address the issue more effectively. My delegation also distinguishes between acts of terrorism and the right of people fighting for self-determination, and holds that terrorism should not be associated with any particular race or religion.

In our efforts to address the multiplicity of international security threats, we should be reminded that the norms and principles of international law should not be set aside. The larger membership of the Organization has a vital stake in ensuring that those efforts are undertaken in a collective spirit, ensuring the centrality of the multilateral process. Multilateralism is still the best option for dealing with the threats and challenges confronting the world today: ensuring peace and security in relations between nations, combating terrorism, protecting human rights and enforcing compliance with international law.

One issue related to the peace and security agenda that was conspicuously missing from the summit outcome document is disarmament and non-proliferation. We are deeply concerned, following the failure of the May 2005 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) to adopt a final consensus document, that the world summit also failed to adopt even a single paragraph on disarmament and non-proliferation. In this regard, the General Assembly needs to clearly signal to the wider public that this body is seized of this critical issue, as weapons of mass destruction pose the greatest threat to human existence. We must also bear in mind that we need to address

issues of nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear technology — the three pillars of the NPT — in a balanced manner. The Assembly should also give greater attention to addressing the threat of the proliferation of small arms and light weapons.

The threats and challenges referred to in the Secretary-General's report are numerous and multifaceted. The summit outcome document, although far from perfect, outlines the reforms that this Organization could undertake to meet those threats and challenges. In order to carry out the reform, we need to enhance the effective management of and modernize the Organization. It is important for Member States to bear in mind that, without adequate resources, the process will not succeed. The General Assembly, as the most representative body of the Organization, must be at the forefront of the reform process. It must continue to be empowered and reinvigorated so that it can play a substantive role. It must act as the main deliberative and policy-making body of the United Nations.

In addition to calling for the reform of the General Assembly, the summit also called for the reform of the entire United Nations system. To that end, we need to be actively engaged in transparent, constructive consultations in working towards acceptable decisions on the establishment of the Human Rights Council and the Peacebuilding Commission, as well as on the reform of the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council and the Secretariat.

This is a momentous period for the United Nations. I would like to recall the words of the President, at the closing of the general debate a few days ago (*see A/60/PV.23*), that the coming days and weeks will determine whether the world summit goes down in history as a missed chance for the United Nations or as the start of the most substantial reform programme in the history of the Organization. My delegation hopes for the latter, and we fully support Mr. Eliasson in his effort to move the process forward.

Mr. Yushkevich (Belarus) (*spoke in Russian*): The report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization (*A/60/1*), as well as the discussions that took place during the recent summit, show once again that humankind and our Organization are deeply concerned about a number of complex global problems. Can we explain the lack of significant progress in resolving such problems by any deficiency in the human intellect? Human beings have plumbed the mysteries of the world, resolved complex technical problems and created virtual worlds, yet people are continuing to die in the real world as a result of hunger, disease and violence. This is not so much a question of our level of knowledge — or even of the reform of the Organization — as of the spiritual State of humankind and its ability to enter a new stage of evolution.

How can we talk about improvement if we can reconcile ourselves to such anachronistic phenomena as neo-slavery and human trafficking? We are convinced that such evils cannot be eradicated if there is still a lucrative market for them. We propose that a list be drawn up of the sources of that problem and of possible mechanisms to eliminate it. Until those who purchase human beings are brought to justice, any efforts to eliminate the problem will remain futile and will be seen by the victims of the slave trade as hypocritical. Robust action to counter all forms of human trafficking should be taken in the context of a global movement: a partnership, under the auspices of the United Nations, to combat slavery and trafficking in persons in the twenty-first century.

We would like to commend a number of constructive initiatives, including the proposal made by the group of developing countries to enhance the coordinating role of the United Nations in conducting international research into alternative sources of energy.

Belarus is prepared to join in the partnership initiated by the United States aimed at pooling international efforts for a rapid response in the event of an avian flu pandemic. Clearly, the right solution to global problems will require coordinated and — most important — voluntary efforts on the part of all States. Such consolidation is virtually impossible in a unipolar world order, with its one-sided concept of good and evil. Certain Western countries view the worsening conflicts in this era of globalization as a "clash of civilizations", and they intend to eliminate the effects of processes that do not benefit them by establishing standard models of ideology and statehood. Countries that want to follow their own path of social development are subjected to harassment and labelling, and are proclaimed to be "rogue States".

We are convinced that it will do no good to disregard the diversity of approaches to progressive

development by imposing another's will on peoples that have chosen their own path of peaceful development based on historical, social and cultural values and traditions. We regret the politicization of many United Nations activities, in particular in the area of human rights.

The Commission on Human Rights is becoming an instrument to exert political pressure on sovereign States through the manipulation of the human rights agenda. The practice of adopting country resolutions has proven to be ineffective. It sows hatred and distrust among countries and impedes open and constructive cooperation. The new human rights body should accord priority attention to global thematic human rights issues in the context of combating poverty, racist and nationalist movements and terrorism.

The reform of the human rights organs should be based on the principle of transparency, non-selectivity, and the sovereign equality of all States Members of the United Nations. The creation of a human rights council as a kind of select club will therefore merely increase the use of double or arbitrary standards against States that are in the wrong. It will not help to protect human rights by strengthening cooperation in national efforts, but will simply become a forum for settling accounts with countries that have the temerity to conduct their own independent external policies.

The tendency to mainstream Western standards is becoming clear. The report of Mr. Sach's Task Force contains politicized recommendations, inter alia, about the inadvisability of providing technical assistance to unworthy countries. We believe it important to emphasize the need to maintain generally recognized principles in the United Nations operational activities for development in order to strengthen partnership and mutual trust with the developing countries.

Belarus views this past year as an extremely intense phase of the Organization's work. If all of our expectations of attaining our goals have not been met, we must do even more to further coordinate our efforts to find new mechanisms for resolving strategic problems. The best and only forum for such work remains the United Nations.

Mr. Sen (India): I would like to assure the full support of our delegation to the presidency in its endeavours to tackle the follow-up and implementation of the 2005 outcome document approved recently by our heads of State and Government.

The report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization predates the summit and, in a sense, the outcome document is a comment on the report, and the statements of our heads of State and Government and foreign ministers constitute comments on the outcome document. To restrict comments to the report would therefore be an exercise in futility, a putting-back of the clock.

I would therefore briefly make some general observations on how we see our continuing work. In the first place, one of the lessons of the process leading to the outcome document is the need for a transparent, open-ended process in which the broadest possible agreement is sought through open debate.

One of the examples of such an agreement that, unfortunately, does not find a place in the outcome document concerns trade and other important aspects of development. One cannot long continue to square the circle. One cannot go on talking of the cancellation of debts, but restrict it to money from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and include recycled aid and debt; of growth without raising investment and savings rates through meeting official development assistance targets and using innovative sources of financing; of foreign direct investment where even physical infrastructure does not exist and public sector investment is required; of sustainable development without the transfer of resources or environmentally friendly technology; of the development dimension of the Doha Round without the principle of special and differential treatment; or of achieving the Millennium Development Goals without achieving Goal 8.

There was broad agreement between the G-77 and the European Union on giving a clear political direction to the World Trade Organization ministerial meeting in December. That remains a vital necessity. That the United Nations has to give such direction and that such direction is heeded is shown by the impact of the outcome document on the Fund and Bank. The Development Committee of the IMF and World Bank, in its latest communiqué of 25 September, refers to the document in urging developed countries to make concrete efforts to fulfil the 0.7 per cent official development assistance target and also considers "enhancing the voice of the developing and transition countries in our institutions to be of vital importance". It promises to build political consensus in the context of the IMF quota review. Similarly, it is vital that monitoring the progress made in the implementation of

Millennium Development Goal 8 by developed countries become an integral part of the monitoring of the Goals as a whole. Therefore, country-level reports by developed countries with regard to progress on commitments to developing countries remain important.

India has an extensive bilateral programme of economic and scientific cooperation with Africa through grants and credits that also encompass the vital areas of infrastructure and public health. We would welcome, through the United Nations system, the mobilization of greater resources and coalitions of the willing not to wage war, but to come together in joint initiatives in the areas of agriculture — especially dry-land farming — water management and public health. Similar efforts, taking special needs into account, would be required in the case of the least developed countries, the land-locked developing countries and the implementation of the Mauritius strategy for the small island developing States.

The outcome document has given an impulse to the development of a strong counter-terrorism agenda. The Secretary-General's address to the International Summit on Democracy, Terrorism and Security in Madrid this year remains relevant. The question of defining an offence is a matter of precisely legal language and is already reflected in the text of the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism being considered by the Sixth Committee. The objective here is a criminal law instrument that would facilitate judicial cooperation, mutual assistance and extradition.

The General Assembly has to deal with that issue or else the Security Council will continue to do so. Either the General Assembly will have to adopt a multilateral negotiated document or leave the Security Council to continue to deal with it in a partial, piecemeal manner governed by the political imperatives of the moment. We are near a compromise solution that would enable agreement on the important article 18 of the convention. The General Assembly has the central role in codifying international law. As Jennings said, we should not fall prey to "flights of erroneous fancy from the Nuremberg tribunal" and believe thereby that "we are developing international law".

The facts speak for themselves. It is precisely the debate on Security Council reform that gave synergy to the process of reform. The omissions on development and the lack of sufficient progress on Security Council reform led to some of the energy and colour being drained from the discussion of institutional reform and what followed. The reason is obvious. For any satisfactory progress to be achieved, one has to address the question of the distribution of economic power — that is, development — and equally of political power of which, in the United Nations, the Security Council is the locus.

We look forward to working together on the peacebuilding commission, the human rights council and reform of the Secretariat. In a post-conflict settlement in which the party defeated could not be considered to be an imminent threat to peace and security, the Security Council has, following resolution 687 (1991), imposed de facto treaty obligations on States without their consent. Therefore, if we are not to repeat history, whether it be in the human rights council or, in this particular context, the peacebuilding commission, we will have to decide with a sense of history the questions of who sets up the body and to whom it reports, since those are quite obviously not simple or innocent questions.

To overcome the marginalization of the developing countries, their empowerment through reform of the Security Council remains imperative. We would continue to work with like-minded and other countries to reach the broadest possible agreement on an expansion of the permanent and non-permanent categories, to respect deadlines, and to bring the reform process to an early and successful conclusion.

There has been considerable progress in implementing reforms in the Secretariat. Insofar as review of mandates is concerned, this is clearly a legislative prerogative which we hope the relevant intergovernmental bodies will complete expeditiously.

We look forward to proposals from the Secretary-General on ethics and accountability, on which I understand he has taken action, as well as on the strengthening of the capacity and independence of the oversight structures of the Organization. What is required is not simply to fill a breach with new structures and posts, but systems and sustained managerial attention to their enforcement.

The Capital Master Plan for United Nations Headquarters in New York is an issue that has, sadly enough, been mired in what the Secretary-General

terms political and financial dynamics. This has adversely affected the issues of both financing and swing space. We await a comprehensive report from the Secretary-General during the current General Assembly session in order urgently to take the required decisions on this issue.

Mr. Wali (Nigeria): I wish to express the appreciation of the delegation of Nigeria to Secretary-General Kofi Annan for his report on the work of the Organization, contained in document A/60/1. The report highlights some of the challenges confronting the international community. These include conflict prevention and resolution, terrorism, natural disasters, disease control, disarmament and arms control, poverty and sustainable development. The report, which reviews constructive and enduring solutions to fundamental global problems, also offers recommendations and highlights the complexity of the tasks confronting humanity.

It is in this context that Nigeria views with concern the persistence of conflicts in many regions of the world. We therefore commend the efforts of the United Nations, through the Security Council, for the maintenance of international peace and security. While the United Nations has achieved some measure of success, we still need to do more to usher in durable peace and stability in conflict- ravaged areas.

Nigeria also commends the efforts of the Secretary-General in his continued use of preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peacebuilding, as well as of special envoys, in the maintenance of international peace and security. Here, to some extent, we have been able to achieve the targets set in the Millennium Declaration, despite the rather discouraging surge in the global demand for peacekeeping operations.

We note with satisfaction that regional organizations have become essential partners of the United Nations in the maintenance of international peace and security through the establishment of institutional cooperation for conflict prevention, management and resolution. In this connection, we commend the successful sixth high-level meeting between the United Nations and regional organizations held in New York in July 2005, and urge that such meetings continue.

We commend the effective cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Intergovernmental Authority of Development (IGAD) in peacekeeping, peacemaking and preventive diplomacy, particularly in Côte d'Ivoire and the Darfur region in the Sudan.

As the world continues to suffer devastating consequences of terrorist acts, Nigeria reaffirms its condemnation of international terrorism. We pledge our cooperation with other members of the international community, through bilateral and multilateral efforts, to combat this menace in all its forms. We support the Secretary-General's five-point strategy to combat terrorism set out at the International Summit on Democracy, Terrorism and Security, which was held in Madrid in March 2005. We look forward to the international community's conclusion of a comprehensive convention against terrorism.

The illicit trade in small arms and light weapons continues to be of serious concern to the international community, and particularly to developing countries, since it contributes to conflicts and political instability. The excessive accumulation and easy availability of small arms and light weapons hinders peacebuilding and threatens human security. We are disappointed at reported cases of non-compliance with nuclear non-proliferation commitments and an ambivalent commitment to disarmament. We therefore encourage early revitalization of multilateral instruments to prevent proliferation and promote disarmament.

The HIV/AIDS pandemic continues to pose grave challenges to our development efforts. We appreciate the efforts of the United Nations and the contributions of the international community in combating this scourge, particularly in Africa. We note the assistance of the Secretary-General's Special Envoys for HIV/AIDS in promoting key issues and advocating an expanded response to HIV/AIDS, especially in Africa.

Nigeria notes the deliberations and decisions taken by our leaders very recently on the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). It has always been our view that the MDGs must be pursued as part of a larger development agenda that encompasses addressing the needs of all developing countries, as well as seeking to reduce poverty and inequality. We endorse the recommendation that social integration and issues that require long-term approaches must be addressed equally. These include the differential impact of

globalization and increasing the participation of developing countries in global economic governance.

Nigeria reaffirms its support for the priority accorded by the United Nations to the special needs of Africa and notes with satisfaction that recognition was given to this subject in the outcome document. For too long, Africa has remained the backwater of development. But with the ascendancy of a new crop of leaders committed to the fundamental transformation of African societies, we are confident that the social and economic circumstances of African peoples will be progressively improved. Our sense of optimism is buoyed by the continuing efforts of the United Nations to facilitate the implementation of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), as well as specific measures taken or contemplated by our development partners.

Nigeria reaffirms its commitment to General Assembly resolution 58/295, which outlined specific measures to strengthen the security and safety of the United Nations system, including field security arrangements at all duty stations worldwide. We consider measures to unify the separate security structures into the Department of Safety and Security as well placed.

We have noted the implementation of the various reform proposals, as contained in the Secretary-General's 2002 report entitled "Strengthening the United Nations: an agenda for further change" (*A/57/387*). Some of the positive effects of these reforms include a revised programme budget for 2004-2005; shorter, more efficient cycle planning and budgeting for the biennium 2006-2007, a reduction in the quantity of reports and meetings and greater integration of human rights elements into the work of United Nations country teams.

We support the Secretary-General's proposals to strengthen Secretariat capacity through the improved performance of senior management and by enhancing oversight, accountability and transparency; we hope that this will be sustained. We recall that our heads of State or Government, at the end of the High-level Plenary Meeting, expressed similar expectations.

The Nigerian delegation, therefore, is ready to engage in discussions with Member State delegations, with a view to elaborating the various reform initiatives. It is essential in this regard that the requested reports be submitted to the General Assembly early, through the normal process, so as to enable us to build on the momentum generated by the High-level Plenary Meeting.

The United Nations Charter and other sources of international law have established the framework under which justice and respect for the obligations arising from treaties can be maintained. Our affirmation of respect for the Charter and international law should be reflected in our actions and in a commitment to multilateralism. We note that the rule of law is becoming more widely accepted and that States are increasingly employing treaties to regulate their relations.

In conclusion, Nigeria again commends the Secretary-General for his leadership, vision and example in strengthening the effectiveness of the Organization. We have no doubt that the implementation of the various initiatives he proposed, and which were adopted at the summit, will help to transform the United Nations into the Organization of our dreams, reinforce trust and confidence in its efficiency, and facilitate the attainment of the lofty goals reflected in its Charter and restated in the outcome document. In that pursuit, I wish to pledge Nigeria's continued cooperation.

Mr. Laurin (Canada): On behalf of Canada, Australia and New Zealand, I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his report (*A/60/1*). As he notes, the past year has seen both progress and setbacks for the international community. The 2005 World Summit Outcome (*resolution 60/1*) reflects that reality, and provides a starting point from which we must build in order to ensure that the sixtieth anniversary is truly a year of reform.

We are pleased with many of the achievements that the 2005 World Summit Outcome represents, including the reaffirmation of core values and principles, cooperation to address global health threats, the reaffirmation of the Monterrey Consensus and strong commitment to achieving the Millennium Development Goals. We are pleased that the development outcomes recognize the need for good governance and anti-corruption measures in developing countries and the crucial role of trade liberalization in stimulating sustainable development. We are heartened by progress towards the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission and the decision to create a new Human Rights Council, which constitute major

institutional reforms in their own right. And we are particularly pleased that the membership was able to agree on strong language on the responsibility to protect, which articulates for the first time universal acceptance of our collective responsibility to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity.

While the achievements are significant, the omissions are also striking. We particularly regret the complete absence of agreed text in the areas of disarmament and non-proliferation and on the International Criminal Court, and the weak language on women's human rights and equality. We are also disappointed that States were unable to agree upon a stronger political declaration on terrorism.

Canada, Australia and New Zealand strongly support summit progress on administrative and management reform. We urge the Secretary-General to shoulder his responsibility and make proposals during the sixtieth session — indeed, this autumn — on the key issues identified for action, notably, review of United Nations human resources and financial policies and regulations, the review of long-term mandates and measures to enhance ethical conduct and strengthen independent oversight and accountability. Taken together, that package can modernize what we do and how we do it, while bolstering the credibility of the Organization and public confidence in it.

In the weeks ahead, we must all work together to ensure that the positive momentum of the summit is not lost, but is rather harnessed in support of implementation. In that regard, it is particularly important that we move quickly to finalize the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission, so that it can commence its work no later than 1 January 2006, as mandated by our leaders. Similarly, we encourage the President of the General Assembly to move quickly to launch a process that will lead to the establishment of an effective and credible Human Rights Council, one that provides for the specific input and participation of civil society groups. We believe work on those major institutional innovations and other summit initiatives can and should proceed in parallel, so that no initiative is advanced at the cost of another.

As we move forward, Canada, Australia and New Zealand believe that it is essential that the agreements outlined in the outcome document serve as the foundation for our work, and that attempts to reopen or renegotiate core summit decisions be rejected.

Australia, New Zealand and Canada look forward to working with all members to ensure that we realize the aspirations embodied in the summit outcome document.

Mr. Mérorès (Haiti) (*spoke in French*): Allow me to commend Mr. Jan Eliasson on the way in which he is conducting our work. I would like to assure him of the full cooperation of the Haitian delegation. I also wish to thank Secretary-General Kofi Annan for his report on the work of the Organization (*A/60/1*). Once again, I pay tribute to his tireless efforts and his resolute commitment to work to build a fairer world. In that regard, we associate ourselves with the statement made earlier today by Jamaica on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

The comprehensive report of the Secretary-General is fully in line with the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and the promotion of sustained economic growth and sustainable development. It appraises the progress made in the areas of development, security, human rights and United Nations reform.

In the area of the maintenance of peace and security, certain significant progress has been made, particularly in Africa, in the Middle East and in Asia. The United Nations must pursue its efforts in order to resolve other conflicts in various parts of the world.

In that regard, I would like to pay tribute to the very important work done by the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), which, together with the Haitian National Police, is striving to create a secure and stable environment in the country. Those efforts will make it possible for the constitutional and political process to move forward. Despite certain isolated acts on the part of armed groups, the security situation in my country has gradually improved. Preparations are under way for the holding of presidential and legislative elections by the end of 2005. The Transitional Government will do its utmost, with the assistance of the international community and MINUSTAH, to ensure that the elections take place with full transparency and in the best possible security conditions. On 7 February 2006 a democratically elected Government will be invested with full powers.

Haiti will continue to rely on the support of the international community in order to strengthen its democratic institutions, because it has been precisely our shortcomings in that area that has cost us so much disruption in recent decades.

How can we live free from fear if the threat of terrorism is always with us? We must pool our efforts to find the best strategies to enable us to tackle and defeat that scourge. The unspeakable terrorist acts perpetrated in many places around the world this year have highlighted the serious nature of the scourge for the whole international community.

In the area of disarmament, concern persists in the international community. The 2005 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, held in May, failed to reach substantive agreement. It would be disastrous for the international community if terrorist organizations were to possess weapons of mass destruction. Therefore it is essential to revitalize the multilateral instruments designed to promote disarmament and prevent nuclear proliferation.

Poverty, hunger, preventable and curable diseases, illiteracy, drugs and natural disasters are other threats and challenges facing today's world. The international community must further commit itself to a tireless struggle to achieve a safer, freer and fairer world, marked by genuine solidarity.

On 16 September, in the 2005 World Summit Outcome (*resolution 60/1*), our leaders reaffirmed the Millennium Declaration adopted on the threshold of the twenty-first century. Five years after the Millennium Declaration of 2000, they reviewed progress made in implementing the Millennium Development Goals. The finding was that one of the major and most pressing goals set for 2015, the reduction of extreme poverty, would not be achieved without major readjustments.

The reduction of extreme poverty is a shared responsibility. On the one hand, the developing countries must draft national strategies aimed at achieving the targets set out in the Millennium Development Goals. On the other hand, the developed countries must honour their commitments. They promised to increase official development assistance to 0.7 per cent of their GDP by 2015. In July 2005 during the G-8 summit, the wealthy countries promised to increase their annual assistance by 50 thousand million dollars by 2010.

My delegation welcomes the commitment made recently at London by the G-8 to cancel the multilateral debt of the 18 most indebted countries. Likewise, we appeal to the wealthy countries to consider establishing a moratorium on the debt of several very poor countries that were not included on that initial list, such as my country. These countries urgently need to reduce pressure on their budgets, which are financed from meagre resources.

The burden of servicing debt and the payment of arrears have a suffocating effect on the economies of developing countries. They prevent the financing of public development projects and programmes, especially social programmes. A moratorium would allow the reduction of unemployment, calm the situation and decrease social tension.

There should also be an open, predictable and non-discriminatory financial and trade system. The establishment of strategies that guarantee decent labour conditions, provide for access to inexpensive medicines and spread new information and communication technologies are also needed.

A true global partnership would help the developing countries and promote development at the global level. Our countries would benefit from world growth resulting from a spirit of fair trade where the advances of some are not made at the expense of others. The result would be more stable economic growth, better capable of supporting development.

There can be no development without security and respect for human rights. The Secretary-General understood this well in his report entitled "In larger freedom: towards development, security and human rights for all" (*A/59/2005*).

Haiti wishes to reiterate its commitment to our Organization's ideals and principles, to universality and to the goals of peace and development through international cooperation. Haiti shares the Millennium Development Goals.

Since the beginning of the political transition now under way, the Government of Haiti has been working hand in hand with the international community for the establishment of the rule of law, a prerequisite for socio-economic development.

The role played by a renewed and strengthened United Nations is indispensable. The Security Council must reflect the international reality of the twenty-first century by including Member States capable of assuming peacekeeping responsibilities. The developing countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean must be represented there with permanent seats. Today's reality and the multiple limits of our world require the Security Council to open its membership to others. Unilateral policies no longer have a reason to exist.

Nonetheless, the debate concerning expansion of the Council must not take precedence over other important issues concerning reform of the United Nations as a whole, namely the reform of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council and the creation of a Human Rights Council as a central body and the Peacebuilding Commission.

At the time of its sixtieth anniversary, the United Nations must play an indispensable role in accordance with the Charter in peacekeeping, international security and the settlement of conflicts and, above all, serve the goal of sustainable development, the other name for peace.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.

United Nations A/60/PV.25

General Assembly
Sixtieth session

Official Records

25th plenary meeting
Thursday, 29 September 2005, 3 p.m.
New York

President Mr. Eliasson ..... (Sweden)

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Agenda item 110 (*continued*)

Report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization (A/60/1)

Mr. Kazykhanov (Kazakhstan): At the outset, I would like to pay tribute to the Secretary-General for his comprehensive report on the work of the Organization, which covers the multifaceted activities of all United Nations institutions. Indeed, this has been a most challenging, crucial and fruitful year in United Nations history. The Secretary-General and the Organization have taken bold and practical steps in several important areas — namely, security, development and human rights, as well as institutional reforms.

Two weeks ago, we all witnessed the historic United Nations summit. Its outcome document, in the words of the Secretary-General, is "a good instrument to streamline the United Nations to meet the many new challenges of the twenty-first century". Now, we must take coordinated action to fully utilize these new opportunities.

Kazakhstan stresses an urgent need to deal with global challenges to disarmament and non-proliferation. As we all know, the 2005 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons failed to set up a balanced and comprehensive mechanism that would strengthen the international non-proliferation regime and facilitate the attainment of the goal of the complete elimination of nuclear weapons. More disturbing, however, is the lack of clear recommendations on the burning issues of non-proliferation and disarmament in the outcome document of the 2005 United Nations summit.

Today, challenges and threats, including those involving the uncontrolled spread of nuclear weapons and the risk of their finding a way into the hands of terrorists, have grown manyfold. The elimination of such threats requires joint, well-coordinated and effective action at all levels. We believe that international cooperation in fighting terrorism should be pursued in strict compliance with the norms of international law, and we look forward to the early completion of a comprehensive convention against international terrorism.

We support further the universalization and enhancement of anti-terrorist treaty mechanisms. The signing by Kazakhstan of the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism is a practical reaffirmation of that position.

In January 2005, Kazakhstan hosted a meeting of the Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC) of the Security Council. We consider it very significant that the CTC meeting was convened jointly with the Commonwealth of Independent States in the heart of the Eurasian continent. Counter-terrorism activities in our region are closely linked with efforts to prevent the trafficking of drugs, arms and human beings. Most of the region's organizations pay special attention to the

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development of cooperation in counter-terrorism activities. We believe that that the experience we have gained in the process might prove useful for the CTC.

For Kazakhstan, the proposed Peacebuilding Commission is a step in the right direction. As its main mission, it should strive to avert the recurrence of situations when the lack of a peacebuilding strategy results in the escalation of internal conflicts and, ultimately, in the further loss by States of their capacity to perform their sovereign functions effectively and responsibly.

Our country is actively working on issues related to the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia (CICA). CICA is a venue for an exchange of views on Asian security. It is encouraging to see that the CICA process is gaining momentum and has, indeed, become an important tool of preventive diplomacy.

Achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) should become a central element of the international community's efforts to put an end to poverty, conflict, instability and terrorism. Economic and social development, as well as international cooperation, must become key elements in the preventive approach to collective security. The second national report on the MDGs, recently released in close cooperation with the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan, indicates that our nation has already achieved a number of goals, especially as regards universal education, the eradication of poverty and gender promotion. We are also close to reaching important targets in some other areas.

We commend the United Nations and its specialized agencies for their assistance in addressing the effects of environmental disasters in the Aral Sea area and in the Semipalatinsk region. Problems in those regions are global in scope, as they have a negative effect on the health and livelihood of people in other regions of the globe. In this context, we request the international community to support a draft resolution at the current session of the General Assembly on the Semipalatinsk region, sponsored by Kazakhstan.

We believe that the special needs of landlocked developing countries should be taken fully into account, as outlined in the Almaty Programme of Action. For that reason, Kazakhstan is satisfied that the outcome document of the 2005 United Nations summit contains provisions on improved transit transport capacity of landlocked countries and their access to world markets. In order to stimulate the implementation process of the Almaty Programme of Action, the Government of Kazakhstan, together with the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, held a High-level Meeting on the Role of International, Regional and Subregional Organizations for the Implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action, in Almaty last March. We consider it to be a significant contribution to the implementation of this Programme through strengthened partnerships of all parties concerned, including international, regional and subregional organizations.

Kazakhstan believes that the rule of law is of paramount importance in international relations. We closely link Kazakhstan's development to the further democratization of our society, based on respect for the rights and freedoms of every individual. Therefore, Kazakhstan supports the strengthening of United Nations democratic institutions and human rights machinery. We sincerely hope that these changes are designed to promote the rights and freedoms of citizens and to ensure compliance with the principles of non-interference and sovereign equality of States.

While supporting the reform process, we strongly believe that priority should be given to the General Assembly as the main deliberative, decision-making and representative body of our Organization.

My delegation would like to reiterate that such a sensitive issue as the reform of the Security Council should be resolved on the basis of the broadest possible agreement. We are convinced that the enlargement of the Security Council, in accordance with the principle of equitable geographical representation and on the basis of the contributions of States concerned towards development of the world economy and global security, serves the interests of Member States.

Kazakhstan welcomes the establishment of a standing committee on regional organizations. We hope that improved collaboration of the United Nations with regional organizations will contribute to the collective security system.

Inter-faith dialogue is an integral part of efforts to promote the culture of peace and dialogue among civilizations and to advance the common values outlined in the Millennium Declaration. We believe

that the informal meeting on interreligious dialogue and cooperation for peace, held within the framework of the 2005 summit in New York and cosponsored by Kazakhstan, made a substantial contribution to enhanced interfaith dialogue.

We are grateful to the international community for lending support to our country's initiatives in this area. Kazakhstan has initiated a Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions. The second Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions is to be held next year in Astana. We will discuss the topic of religions, society and international security. Kazakhstan expects representatives of other emerging forums, such as the Alliance of Civilizations, to take part in the Congress.

Our people know that development, security and human rights, the three main pillars of today's world, are not abstract concepts. We realize that eventual success in attaining our objectives will be assured through the mobilization of resources and maximization of support from all members of the international community. Kazakhstan is actively and responsibly involved in all major United Nations activities and in recent years has begun to shoulder more responsibility by making voluntary financial contributions to United Nations funds and programmes.

Mr. Zhang Yishan (China) (spoke in Chinese): I would like to begin by thanking the Secretary-General for his report on the work of the United Nations. The report reviews the work over the past year and contains an array of recommendations on ways to address the challenges facing us today. I would like to focus on three points in connection with the recent summit.

First, on the implementation of the outcome document of the summit, this year marks the sixtieth anniversary of the United Nations. The outcome document, which the summit adopted two weeks ago, reflects a common understanding on the part of all sides and points out the direction for the future work of the United Nations. Currently, the most important task is to implement the outcome document effectively, so as to translate the words into reality. This is a daunting challenge that requires the full cooperation of all. The outcome document involves many aspects. Therefore, its implementation should proceed on all fronts but should also follow an order of priorities. While the focus should be on certain issues, efforts in other areas should proceed in parallel.

We believe that, in the implementation of the outcome document, development should occupy the primary and core position. Maximum efforts should be made to meet the needs of developing countries, especially African countries, in order to inject new vitality into development efforts and to enable developing countries to derive genuine benefit from the summit.

China supports the rapid establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission and believes that it should begin functioning as soon as possible in order to set up an effective link among the United Nations efforts in the areas of peacekeeping, post-conflict reconstruction and development. The agreement to establish this Commission is a major achievement of the summit. It will play a positive role in peaceful reconstruction in conflict areas. We call for the completion of this task as soon as possible.

Terrorism is a common threat to all countries. We support an early completion of the negotiations on a comprehensive convention against terrorism and stand ready to work actively with all countries toward this end.

As for the reform of the Secretariat, we look forward to the relevant report, which is to be submitted by the Secretary-General. The necessary reform of the internal management of the Secretariat will be conducive to the improvement of our Organization's efficiency, so as to make it better able to serve the interests of Member States. Reform measures should aim both at enhancing the managerial capability of the Secretariat and at ensuring that the rights of Member States are safeguarded. We hope that discussions will continue on the report of the Secretary-General in an effort to achieve consensus.

The summit agreed to the establishment of a Human Rights Council. However, great divergences remain over its specific model, size and composition. The causes for these divergences have to do with the politicization of human rights issues and with double standards. We hope that in the coming consultations, States can take a constructive approach to reduce differences, increase common understanding and find appropriate solutions.

There remain divergences of views on some specific issues in the outcome documents. It is impossible for differences of principle to be resolved any time soon. It is of key importance that all sides

accommodate the concerns of others and press on with patient consultations.

Secondly, regarding peace and security, this past year has, as the report says, witnessed both progress and setbacks, not just for the United Nations but also for the world. The United Nations continues to play an important role in helping to solve the questions of Iraq, the Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Afghanistan and Haiti. Success has been achieved in Sierra Leone, Bougainville and Timor Leste. However, in many regions, attempts to resolve tensions have led to stalemates, and there have even been relapses.

The political transitional process in Iraq has entered a key stage, with progress in developing the constitution. The parties concerned should expeditiously improve the security situation in Iraq, enhance the representativity and inclusiveness of the Iraqi political process and help the Iraqi people reconstruct their country. The United Nations should play an active role in the preparations for the general elections and in the promotion of national reconciliation.

The peace process in the Middle East has recently witnessed positive developments. With the cooperation of the Palestinian side, Israel has successfully completed its withdrawal from Gaza and areas in the West Bank. This is of positive significance for the advancement of the talks between the parties and the resolution of the conflict. We hope that both parties will seize this opportune moment and put the Israeli and Palestinian peace process back on the track of the road map as soon as possible.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan), Vice-President, took the chair.

During the past year, United Nations peacekeeping operations encountered challenges on an unprecedented scale. All countries, especially developed countries, should provide greater political support to the United Nations, in terms of troops and resources, so that its peacekeeping operations can be carried out effectively.

China supports efforts by the United Nations to enhance its rapid deployment and strategic preparations capacity and endorses efforts under the guidance of the Security Council to fully mobilize the resources of the regional organizations concerned.

Thirdly, on the question of development, the Secretary-General again emphasizes in his report the importance of development. As he says in his report,

> "Our generation is the first to have the knowledge and resources to eradicate extreme poverty, so there is no longer any excuse for leaving over a billion of our fellow human beings in that state." (*A/60/1, para. 4*)

Achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) is a solemn commitment made by all countries at the summit and doing so is the embodiment of the hope that hundreds of millions of people have placed in the United Nations. Today there is an urgent need to further deepen reforms in order to make the international economic system and rules more fair and just and more reflective of the concerns of developing countries, so as to push the economic globalization process in the direction of balance, universal benefit and win-win situations.

It is therefore necessary to create a favourable financial and trade environment for developing countries, reduce their debt burdens and strengthen their capacity to participate in international economic affairs so that they can truly benefit from economic globalization. At the same time, developing countries should pool their efforts, choose development models in the light of their national conditions, strengthen South-South cooperation and gradually improve their disadvantageous position with respect to economic globalization. A broad consensus has already been reached on the need to strengthen multilateralism in the role of the United Nations — a point that was reaffirmed in the outcome document.

After 60 years of trials and tribulations, the importance of the role of the United Nations in peace and development is self-evident. The tsunami that occurred in the Indian Ocean in December 2004 was a calamity of unprecedented proportions, affecting 14 countries on two continents. Recently, one hurricane after another hit the southern United States, causing destruction and casualties that exceeded predictions. However, in both cases, Governments, international organizations, including United Nations agencies, and members of civil society provided assistance to the best of their ability and swiftly mobilized resources on a massive scale to provide humanitarian relief. That proves that the international community has the ability

to take collective actions promptly and effectively to address major challenges.

The future role of the United Nations will depend on collective efforts and contributions to multilateralism by all parties and on efforts to honour the commitments made at the summit to United Nations reform. Only thus can the United Nations improve its effectiveness, strengthen its leading role in international affairs and consolidate its capacity to address all manner of threats and challenges.

Mr. Sardenberg (Brazil): The discussion of the Secretary-General's report on the work of the Organization (*A/60/1*) provides us, on a yearly basis, with a highly valuable opportunity to take stock of developments affecting the international situation and of United Nations actions to deal with them. The Secretary-General's report once again provides the General Assembly with a comprehensive and very carefully crafted account of challenges met, tasks accomplished and goals remaining to be achieved in our collective endeavour. Through it, he shares with us his keen perception of current realities, of threats currently before us and of how best to deal with them collectively and in the most effective and least individually taxing manner.

This particular session of the General Assembly is, in a way, the culmination of that process. A few weeks ago, our political leaders gathered here at the High-level Plenary Meeting and agreed on a set of goals aimed at the promotion of economic and social development and at the institutional reform of the Organization. In many cases, agreements were reached on the basis of broad principles, and they will have to be fleshed out by the General Assembly during the course of the substantive debate of this session.

Even though the final results of the High-level Plenary Meeting were not as far-reaching as the majority of Member States had expected, its outcome document (*resolution 60/1*) serves as a minimum platform for our continued efforts to promote the much-needed reform and strengthening of the Organization. That will require us to adopt a pronouncedly forward-looking approach to the work of this session.

In terms of development, the international community has recognized that its current efforts have been insufficient and that there is a pressing need to redouble those efforts in order to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by the agreed deadline of 2015. A substantial increase in official development assistance is essential, and innovative sources of financing for development are urgently needed.

As President Da Silva said in his statement before the High-level Plenary Meeting,

> "We must take immediate and courageous steps. The resources available for fighting poverty and hunger must be significantly expanded; we need to provide development opportunities to poor countries" (*A/60/PV.5, p. 16*).

He went on to say that developed countries must realize that that additional effort is not only fair, but absolutely necessary.

That necessity is further underscored by the perception — now universally acknowledged — that the question of development is intrinsically linked to international peace and security. More must be done to promote and facilitate cooperation among developing countries themselves. South-South cooperation does not replace the traditional forms of North-South cooperation, but rather complements it. South-South cooperation modalities often result in more adequate solutions to challenges related to development, as such challenges tend to be faced by most developing countries. However, more resources will be needed to ensure that South-South cooperation — which is already a growing field — can be sufficiently expanded to ensure a scale that allows for the attainment of the MDGs.

In striving to promote social and economic development, we must also focus our attention on cooperation in the field of science and technology, as provided for in the outcome document. International actions in that field must be aimed at ensuring improved access to scientific knowledge and the transfer to developing countries of technologies that are financially accessible and adapted to their circumstances, particularly in the case of the least developed countries. Brazil is now considering organizing a Brazil-Africa technological forum, open to the participation of Governments, civil society, the private sector and financial institutions, aimed at promoting cooperation projects in the areas of science, technology and education.

With regard to the promotion of peace and security, one threat that affects the international community in its entirety is the scourge of terrorism. These unjustifiable acts victimize innocent civilians in rich and poor countries alike, not only directly — through the death and devastation caused by the attacks themselves — but also indirectly, by threatening to undermine the achievements of our societies in the promotion and protection of human rights.

Our delegation supports the Secretary-General's efforts to finalize a common strategy to deal with this menace in full accordance with internationally agreed principles and standards of human rights law and international humanitarian law. We also remain hopeful that the General Assembly will be able to come to an agreement on a comprehensive convention against terrorism, even if the precise definition of terrorism continues to elude us.

A major task before us will be to carry out the process of institutional reform. In the outcome document, our leaders provided for the establishment of a Peacebuilding Commission in order to fill the institutional void that currently exists between the perspective of peace and security and the perspective of development in dealing with situations. The two perspectives are, of course, interrelated. Now we must set up the Commission's standing organizational committee and elect its members in order to meet the deadline to make the Commission operational by the end of this year. In considering the composition of that committee, the General Assembly must be careful not to curtail the participation of countries from the developing world, particularly as we have already been playing an increasing role in the field.

Our political leaders also resolved to create a Human Rights Council and have tasked us, under the able guidance of the President of the General Assembly, to engage in open, transparent and inclusive negotiations to establish its mandate, modalities, functions, size, composition, membership, working methods and procedures. As a measure to reinforce the structures and mechanisms of the Organization in the human rights field, it is imperative that that Council be established on the basis of the principles of universality, dialogue and non-selectivity. In this respect, we should also be careful not to set up a Council so small that it might compromise the ability to ensure balanced and adequate representation of all legal systems or the presence of countries of the developing world, where the issue of human rights is of keen interest to Governments and public alike.

We must also reinforce, adapt and update the Organization's current structures. Brazil is deeply interested in the process of the revitalization of the General Assembly. More than ever, the Assembly is needed to provide leadership and political guidance to the Organization as a whole. In successfully carrying out the tasks set for it by the Plenary Meeting, the Assembly will, in fact, be re-establishing its centrality in the work of the Organization.

The Economic and Social Council must regain its dynamism and influential role. It must be a forum for discussion and for the identification of common ground among the objectives of sustainable development, the eradication of hunger and poverty, good governance and the reduction of inequalities, which are exacerbated by the process of globalization. As is recognized in paragraph 53 of the outcome document (*resolution 60*), early reform of the Security Council is "an essential element of our overall effort to reform the United Nations". We are all convinced of the need to make the Council more representative and democratic.

As the Brazilian Foreign Minister, Ambassador Celso Amorim, stated in the 9th meeting, at the opening of the general debate:

> "At this historic juncture, no Security Council reform effort will be meaningful unless it contemplates an increase in the number of permanent and non-permanent seats, with developing countries from Africa, Latin America and Asia included in both categories. We cannot accept the perpetuation of imbalances that run contrary to the very spirit of multilateralism."

We trust that all those who are genuinely interested in a true reform of the Organization — the overwhelming majority of the membership — will continue to strive for such an expansion of the Security Council. It is clear to all that no reform of the United Nations will be complete without it.

With regard to management reform, we are convinced that the Secretariat must be efficient, effective and accountable. Its staff should work in a culture of transparency, accountability and integrity, as well as in accordance with the provisions of Article 100 of the Charter. In the recruitment of staff, due regard must be paid to the principle of equitable

geographical distribution at all levels. Coordination within the United Nations system in the fight against hunger and poverty — the first Millennium Development Goal — must be urgently improved. Procurement policies must effectively incorporate, in a more balanced way, suppliers from all regions, especially developing countries. Brazil also supports the strengthening of oversight in the United Nations by ensuring the operational independence of the Office of Internal Oversight Services.

Finally, we must point out that one major lacunas in the final outcome document is, of course, the omission of disarmament and non-proliferation. Despite the lack of agreement that led to such a regrettable result, we must emphasize that both items remain a high priority for Brazil and for the international community, and that they will require continued attention on the part of the Organization. Providing guidance in that respect is an additional pressing challenge for the General Assembly at its sixtieth session.

Mr. Ilkın (Turkey): I would like at the outset to thank the Secretary-General for his comprehensive report on the work of the Organization (*A/60/1*) and to commend him for his excellent work.

I would also like to congratulate the President of the General Assembly at its sixtieth session and to express my determination to work closely with him for the realization of the Assembly's goals. He has, indeed, the full confidence and support of my mission.

Since Turkey has aligned itself with the European Union (EU) statement made this morning, I will limit myself to making certain remarks to one particular subject — terrorism.

First of all, we believe that the targeting and deliberate killing not only of civilians and non-combatants but also military and security personnel cannot be justified or legitimized by any cause or grievance. I would like to underline that once again. As we have witnessed time and again, terrorism is a threat to the very existence of individuals, nations and human civilization as a whole. Terrorism is a means of oppression, which humiliates the individual and obstructs the development of humanity. It is a gross violation of human rights, first and foremost the right to life. Thus, all terrorist acts, methods and practices should be condemned as criminal and as unjustifiable under any circumstances, regardless of their motivation. No considerations whatsoever can be invoked to justify terrorist acts.

Turkey, as a country which has suffered from terrorism, has long pointed out the critical nature of the problem and alerted the international community to that scourge. Terrorism is the common problem of the whole international community; no nation can consider itself immune.

Turkey fully adheres to the Secretary-General's five-pillar strategy to combat terrorism. We also welcome the clear condemnation of terrorism in the Summit Outcome (*resolution 60/1*). We are ready to work with others to conclude, during the sixtieth session, a comprehensive convention on international terrorism.

Mr. Acharya (Nepal): I wish to express my sincere appreciation for the manner in which the President has been conducting our work. His statement at the conclusion of the general debate aptly reflected the mood of the deliberations of the Assembly.

I would like to express our sincere thanks to the Secretary-General for his report on the work of the Organization (*A/60/1*). The report is comprehensive and deals with a wide range of issues, including peace and security, development, the reform of the United Nations and its management, and other international issues that are of great interest to all of us.

Many of those important issues were reflected in the outcome document of the recently concluded High-level Plenary Meeting, although many remain to be negotiated further. The outcome document, although not 100 per cent perfect, correctly reflects the hope and aspirations of humanity for peace, security and development, and reiterates our commitment to achieving those goals in a time-bound manner.

The international community must provide its continued support to countries with special needs, such as the least developed and landlocked countries, so as to help them to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Such support can start with sincere implementation of agreed commitments and the further extension of development assistance, market access and debt relief to those countries.

The outcome document categorically states that terrorism is the most serious threat to international peace and security. Nepal joins the international community's condemnation of terrorism in all its forms

and manifestations, committed by whomever, wherever and for whatever purposes, as reflected in the outcome document.

A victim of senseless terror for more than a decade now, Nepal favours combating terrorism resolutely, collectively and comprehensively. We support the early conclusion of a comprehensive convention on international terrorism.

We appreciate the Secretary-General's continued interest and concern at Nepal's current difficult situation. In that context, our attention is drawn to a reference in the report of the Secretary-General about constitutional rule in Nepal. We wish to clarify that the report's specific reference to constitutional rule does not reflect factual reality. His Majesty the King is the custodian of the 1990 Constitution of the Kingdom of Nepal. The constitution is alive and active. The steps His Majesty took on 1 February and later were guided by the constitutional obligation of His Majesty the King as head of State to ensure the security and the integrity of the nation and to create an atmosphere conducive to re-energizing multiparty democracy and the rule of law, which had been frustrated by ongoing violence, terrorism and corruption.

Nepal is committed to the protection and the promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms. We reaffirm our resolute commitment to the implementation of human rights instruments and international humanitarian law. The establishment of an office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in Nepal reflects our desire to protect human rights in accordance with our international legal obligations, although our respect for human rights is rooted in our longstanding moral values and culture.

We welcome the international community's humanitarian assistance for internally displaced persons in Nepal.

Nepal welcomes the decision to establish a Peacebuilding Commission to help countries recovering from conflict. We would like the Commission to have equitable representation from troop-contributing countries and its working methods to be specified in clearer terms.

We are proud to recall our continuous participation in United Nations peacekeeping operations since 1958. Our peacekeepers have earned commendation from the international community for their dedication, discipline and professionalism.

This year, Nepal is celebrating its fiftieth year of membership in the United Nations. Nepal expresses its sincere appreciation to the United Nations for its invaluable contributions to our socio-economic development.

We believe that the package of reforms that are reflected in the Secretary-General's report and which are to be agreed by the Assembly will help give the United Nations the required strength to meet the challenges of our times.

Mr. Toro Jiménez (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): The delegation of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela wishes to take the floor of the General Assembly to thank the Secretary-General for his report on the work of the Organization (*A/60/1*).

We also take this opportunity to express our support for the statement made by the delegation of Jamaica on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

We want to affirm our country's support and cooperation in connection with the efforts and the work of the United Nations. Today, the plans to reform the United Nations harbour a grave threat to the future of the Organization because of the proposals of those that view the United Nations as an instrument in the exclusive service of the interests of the United States and its allies. They see the United Nations as a piece of the new neo-colonial order they wish to establish in the world, allowing them to reorganize and divide up markets and areas of influence and thus achieve imperial hegemony, making good use of hollowed out multilateral institutions that turn their back on the people and work against their interests. That scheme would exacerbate the already profound world imbalance as they introduced new mechanisms of interference and repression — in particular by strengthening the Security Council — to be used to undermine the sovereign authority of Member States of the United Nations on the pretext of fighting terrorism.

Venezuela believes that the United Nations should be the principal democratic organization of a democratic international society that is supported in its socio-economic development. We believe that multilateralism should provide the instrument and the forum for creating a multipolar, independent and

peaceful world of solidarity. Our international action should be guided by the overriding imperative of promoting international cooperation aimed at strengthening South-South cooperation, with the fundamental goal of combating poverty and social exclusion, which impede the self-determination of our peoples and pose a grave threat to the democratic stability of States.

Venezuela believes that those goals can be achieved only through concrete economic and social policies for the inclusion and empowerment of the people and through wise, democratic government that is closely aligned with the people, who should have a participatory, leading role in all collective political decisions at all levels. Implementing such policies requires the massive mobilization of resources for development, coordination among developing countries and concerted efforts between the developing and the developed countries, because developed countries bear the greater share of responsibility for creating a new world whose highest priority is economic progress and social justice. Taking measures to eradicate poverty — and thus redress an age-old injustice — will lay the foundation for a human and just new world order. Nothing could lie further from the sincere call for the Organization to take up the noble, humanitarian task that we have described, and to which we are all committed, than the dark panorama of the present United Nations reform and the final result of the High-level Plenary Meeting.

We are referring to the outcome document that was presented in the Assembly and which is defective owing to its violation of the universal law of respect for due process. For that reason, my delegation reaffirms our President's reservations with respect to a document that our Republic considers null and void in the context of the upcoming negotiations, as he noted in the Assembly.

The report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization poorly reflects the devastating state of the world and the universal Organization, which is called upon to enforce respect for the fundamental values of its Charter in the face of the corrosive action that is destroying, day by day and in an accelerating fashion, human beings, living organisms, the seas, water and productive land — all of which support the life of humankind on Earth. That corrosive action seems to be sweeping us, with no hope of escape, towards a vortex of destruction.

Regrettably, when we contemplate that situation we are overwhelmed by sadness that an Organization such as the United Nations should be so submissive, so bowed under the weight of its own complacency, that it applauds its own ignominious situation along the path to the scaffold.

Venezuela has made substantial efforts to combat poverty — as is plain for all to see if they look with unbiased eyes — despite anti-national, subversive acts that from 2002 onwards have been aimed at undermining the democratic stability of my country and continue to be perpetrated with the financial support of non-governmental organizations assisted by the United States Government.

In that connection, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela would like to place on record that we do not agree with the way in which the United Nations indicators and methods are crafted to handle and evaluate statistical data that measure implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). We do not agree as to the form, the manner or the substance in which the information was presented in the report of the Secretary-General. We do not agree with the monetarist bias of indicators to measure poverty that are linked to the dollar and that do not allow us to quantify the outcome of public policies that address that topic in a comprehensive manner.

In the same vein, there is no way of describing the scope of social policies, specifically missions, nor the role that they play to achieve sustainable, humane and endogenous development that contributes to the attainment of the MDGs. We protest the handling of statistics and the methodological perspective that does not make it possible to consider the specific, concrete socio-political realities of Venezuela, or any other country.

In our case, the events since December 2001 — from the coup d'etat of April 2002 to the defeat of the attempted takeover launched by the oil interests in 2003 — were a fundamental element that reversed what was until then the positive trends in the country towards achieving the MDGs. We compare our situation to that of Asia since the tsunami and wonder if the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, in its next report, should not refer to that historical reality, which will certainly damage social and economic growth in the affected countries during the period under consideration. For our country, the

events of the years 2002 and 2003 were equivalent to a tsunami.

Finally, we would like to say that the proposal to set up a new Human Rights Council with the idea of a simplistic transition from the current Human Rights Commission is not going to solve existing problems. What we have before us is not a problem of semantics — of terms, structures or procedures. Any reforms proposed for the current Human Rights Commission should essentially be designed to bring about profound political changes and, of course, should expand its membership.

Mr. Belinga Eboutou (Cameroon) (*spoke in French*): First of all, I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his excellent analytical report on the work of the Organization. That report gives us a very in-depth overview and a great deal of information on all facets of United Nations activity. Of course, my delegation joins in the statement made by Jamaica on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. The report, along with the outcome document adopted at the end of the recent High-level Plenary Meeting, will be of the greatest usefulness in our deliberations.

In the area of the maintenance of international peace and security, the Secretary-General points out that during the past year most situations in that domain have improved. However, he also points out that others have unfortunately deteriorated. United Nations action, along with the political determination of the parties to a conflict to fulfil their commitments, and that of interested actors who have used all of their influence to resolve the situation, has been decisive in improving the climate of peace. My delegation agrees with that analysis. I would like to commend all United Nations activities undertaken throughout the world to prevent conflicts and to restore, maintain and consolidate peace. In that connection, we encourage parties to ongoing conflicts to demonstrate the political will to settle their differences peacefully and to make use of the good offices of the United Nations.

Cameroon welcomes the electoral assistance given by the United Nations to Africa. As the Secretary-General noted, the holding of credible elections has today become an essential element in the restoration and consolidation of peace, as well as in the prevention of conflicts. Cameroon encourages the Organization to continue working along those lines and for its part will continue to support the inclusion of electoral support in the mandates of peacekeeping operations and in political agreements concluded in countries in conflict or those emerging from conflict that are in political transition.

More specifically with regard to peacekeeping operations, my delegation is in favour of strengthening African capacity in that sphere, including through cooperation with regional organizations. Such capacity-building should necessarily include provision for the establishment of African contingents and the improvement of their ability to respond rapidly on the ground. Indeed, Africa's autonomy in the area of peacekeeping is a necessity. It is part of the list of special needs of Africa in the areas of peace and security.

In the area of cooperation for development, the Secretary-General advocates, with regard to Africa's special needs, international support for the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). The Secretary-General's report, which makes recommendations on the way to mobilize such support, will be considered during the current session and my delegation will make substantive comments on the item at that time.

NEPAD will be a powerful engine for development in Africa if African debt on the condition that debt is alleviated or even cancelled, that assistance increases considerably, and that growth and the combat against poverty are stimulated through equitable participation in world trade.

Cameroon welcomed with satisfaction the confirmation of the cancellation of 100 per cent of the debt owed to the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the African Development Bank by a number of heavily indebted poor countries. We believe that this measure is a promising one that should be extended speedily to additional countries. In that connection, we have high hopes for the meeting to be held this weekend in London.

My delegation has taken due note of the contents of paragraph 25 of the report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization. In that paragraph, the Secretary-General deals with the implementation of the 10 October 2002 ruling by the International Court of Justice regarding the territorial dispute between Cameroon and Nigeria. I should like to express my country's appreciation and gratitude to the Secretary-General for his good offices and for the ongoing

interest he has shown in the implementation of that decision. I should like to take this opportunity to reaffirm Cameroon's resolute determination — which, in fact, is noted in the report, to "moving the process forward in accordance with the ruling of the International Court of Justice".

We welcome the Secretary-General's decision to report on his work with regard to this dispute in the part of his report devoted to conflict prevention and to the restoration of peace.

Cameroon wishes to reiterate the proposal it made in this very Hall on 23 September 2005, during the general debate. My country, as members will recall, emphasized the need fully to inform Member States, the Security Council and the General Assembly of the status of the implementation of the rulings handed down by the International Court of Justice, just as those organs are informed of the Court's annual activities.

Implementation of the rulings of the International Court of Justice — for which it is not responsible — remains of pivotal importance to international peace and security, because a dispute does not end, and is not considered to have ended, until the Court's ruling has been fully implemented.

The situation resulting from the non-implementation, for an extended period, of a ruling can jeopardize international peace and security. That is why my country believes that the Secretary-General must regularly inform, in detail, the Security Council of the status of decisions handed down by the Court and inform Member States in his report to the General Assembly on the work of the Organization, whether or not the Organization is directly involved in the implementation process.

We believe that all States should be informed of what is being done to achieve peace so that they can assist the protagonists involved by lending support and advice.

Mr. President, we hope that our request will be included among the conclusions that you will be drawing from this debate. If, indeed, responsibility for international peace and security falls on each and every Member State, the implementation of the Court's rulings — rulings which contribute to it — are just as important.

In conclusion, Cameroon supports the Secretary-General's appeal to reflect, at this sixtieth anniversary of the United Nations, on ways in which we could better discharge our duties and responsibilities. We remain convinced that, without the support and cooperation of Member States, the United Nations will not be in a position to face the challenges of this new century or to meet the expectations of peoples in the United Nations.

The Acting President: May I take it that the General Assembly takes note of the report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization contained in document A/60/1?

It was so decided.

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 110?

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 4.20 p.m.